THE NO-BAIL SOLUTION TO DRUGS AND CRIME

APRIL 24, 1989 · $2.50

THE NEW REPUBLIC

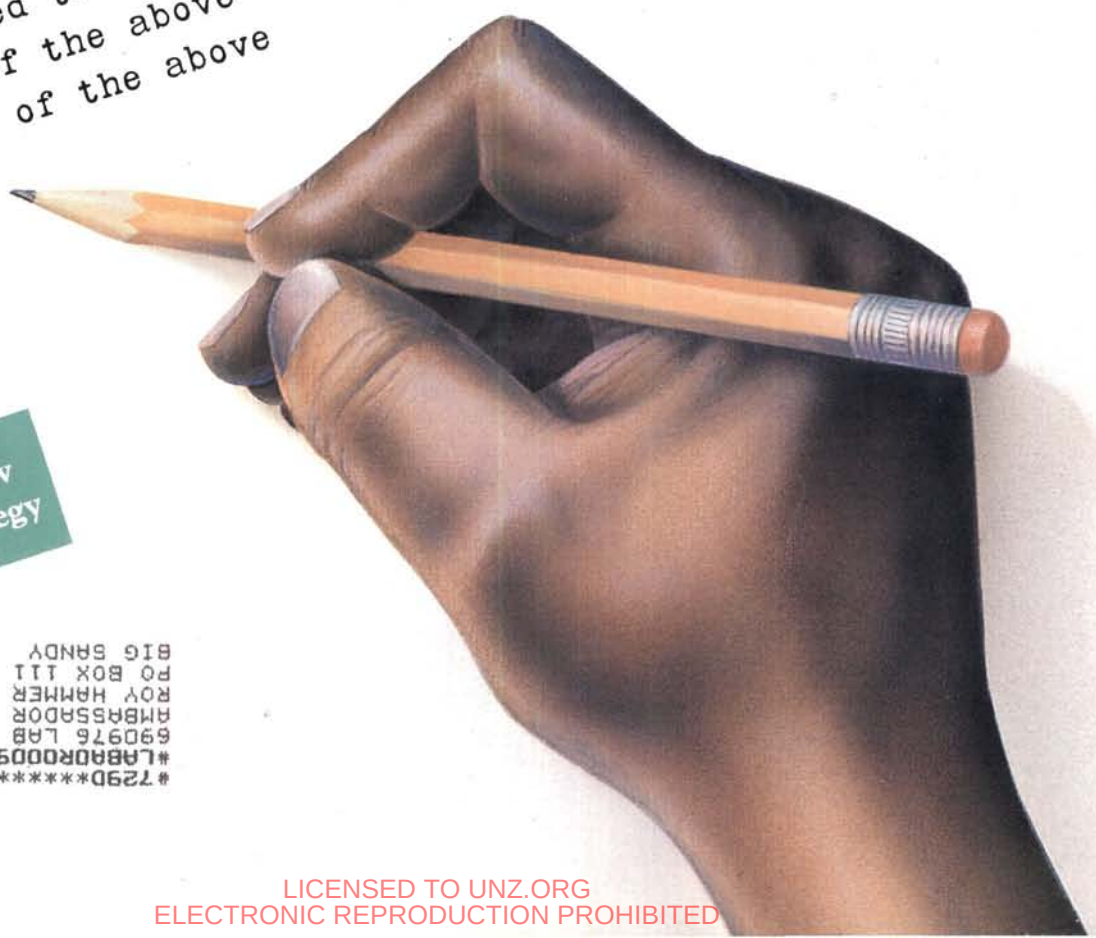
Paul Berman on Another New Left Memoir · Flannery O'Connor's Immaculate Perception

The Princeton SAT Racket

by Joshua Hammer

How an Ivy League graduate

ⓐ got rich
ⓑ got rich by teaching affluent white kids how to cheat on their SATs
ⓒ claimed to be helping poor black kids
ⓓ all of the above
ⓔ none of the above



he Editors on the New
entral American Strategy

#T29D**********3-DIGIT 757
#LRBAOR0097#
690976 LRB AOR00099 H458 JAN08
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE 1990
ROY HAMMER LIB 16#VE
PO BOX 111
BIG SANDY TX 75755

87445

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

The Old Wine's New Bottle

To the editors:
I see that even THE NEW REPUBLIC is not immune to that most disconcerting of our societal insecurities: the nagging compulsion to take a perfectly good thing and mangle it beyond repair, all in the name of "change." I refer, of course, to your recent renovation of my favorite magazine. The "old" TNR was a thing of beauty, visually harmonious and correctly understated. The "new" TNR, though still a tolerable read, looks suspiciously like the work of some star-crossed committee. Why, for instance, have you allowed your once-proud 1914 galleon to founder on the ink reef of the lead editorial? Middle-age face-lifts are OK when they're needed, sad and a little embarrassing when they're not. TNR was already good-looking and, of course, unspeakably virile. Let's hope the lift doesn't start to sag.

MICHAEL BISHOP
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
What have you guys done to the look of THE NEW REPUBLIC?

Now your makeup is as difficult to follow as your politics.

JULES FEIFFER
New York, New York

To the editors:
As a reader of TNR since 1940, please accept my congratulations on your new style format. As an older reader, I am delighted with the large type. I began to read THE NEW REPUBLIC as a student in Central High School in Philadelphia. As the librarian of GE I have always made it a point to subscribe to TNR as well as to read every issue religiously. Many years of growth and wider readership to a splendid journal of opinion.

LARRY CHASEN
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the editors:
TNR has succeeded well in dressing up the old boy in its new style. It is a challenge to make an all-text journal look interesting, but your new interior design manages to keep the delicate balance between typographical variety and readability without becoming too distracting.

I can't say the same about your cover style, though. It is ironic that, in your search for a style that would distinguish TNR's cover on a crowded newsstand, you've come up with the most undistinctive design gracing TNR in 30 years. TNR's best cover design, introduced in 1959 and lasting through the 1960s and 1970s, was a classic—it could be spotted among hundreds of mags on the stand immediately—and it made a classy T-shirt too!

RONALD B. LEVINE
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the editors
The credentials of your design firm notwithstanding, the new NEW REPUBLIC looks like a cross between a ransom note and the 1950 Encyclopedia Britannica.

JON AUSTIN
Washington, D.C.

To the editors
I don't like it. Too crowded, and not enough white space. More space between lines would help, but the problem is that the previous design was exceptionally good. But you really seem to want your readers to like it, and I appreciate that. Keep tinkering!

BILL NOVAK
Boston, Massachusetts

To the editors
The new cover: oh well, if you insist. The rest: is it a joke or a bad dream?

TOM OLESON
Stockholm, Sweden

The Rushdie Reformation

To the editors:
The Cambridge Diarist is to be commended for recognizing that most of the writers who came to the defense of Salman Rushdie's right to have his latest intemperate screed properly displayed have in the past "been indifferent to the innocent victims . . . of bloody upheavals they have celebrated in foamy speeches and heavy books" ("Embroiled Salman," March 20). In a certain sense, the Diarist may also be right in asserting that, because of the clerical-fascist character of the Ayatollah's movement, "most of the PEN luminaries never invested heavily" in Khomeini's revolution. Certainly the Western left's enthusiasm for that revolution dissipated much more rapidly than did its affection for Mao, Castro, and the Hanoi regime.

Yet the revolution enjoyed virtually unanimous support from leftist intellectuals during the bloody upheaval that brought Khomeini to power and for some months thereafter. My own cursory check of the *Nation*, the *Progressive*, and the *New Statesman* for 1979 has unearthed ringing endorsements and ingenious defenses of the Mad Mullahs and their revolution from the likes of Richard Falk, Ervand Abrahamian, Sidney Lens, Fred Halliday, and the sainted I. F. Stone, who found in the Ayatollah's triumph "a victory to thrill a democrat's heart," and who was delighted to find that "no revolution ever took power with . . . so little bloodshed." Frances FitzGerald, a prominent figure in the Rushdie demonstration, wrote in the *Nation* shortly after the Shah's departure that "the Shiite religious leaders—the *mujtahids*—provided some tactical management, but they did not control the rebellion," and that in any case they "represented firm moral standards, tradition, . . . an ideal of brotherhood, and thus a means of cooperation, and finally the spirit of Iranian nationalism," which she clearly regarded as a Good Thing. FitzGerald was somewhat uncertain about Iran's future, largely because she feared the residual power of the Shah's generals, but she was sure the revolutionaries would try to create "what the American supporters of the Shah from President Carter to Senator Moynihan claimed to want for Iran and all Third World countries: democratic institutions."

In addition to the usual swarm of left-wing intellectuals, the Khomeini revolution received support from such academic specialists as Richard Cottam and James T. Bill (both of whom somehow managed to emerge from the subsequent *débâcle* with their reputation intact), pro-Third Worldist political figures such as Andrew Young and Jesse Jackson, and from a number of Carter State Department officials, most notably Henry Precht. Taken together, this constellation managed to exert enough pressure on the Carter administration to produce a series of soft-headed policy decisions, whose effect was to guarantee the victory of the Islamic revolution. Perhaps it is ironic that so many of those who rightly twitted the Reagan administration for selling arms to a terrorist state, and who are now more outraged than most by the Ayatollah's latest outrage, did more than their bit for the Ayatollah when it was still possible to block his ascent. But I, for one, am determined not to forget it, and I am less inclined than the Diarist to forgive it.

DAVID ROBERTS JR.
Houston, Texas

Taking Pound for Pound

To the editors:
Denis Donoghue, reasoning that posterity won't care about Ezra Pound's "personal and political exorbitance," prefers that, in the present, the critic address only the fact that Pound wrote major po-

continued on page 42

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Property of
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE LIBRARY
Big Sandy, Texas

RECEIVED
APR 12 1989

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

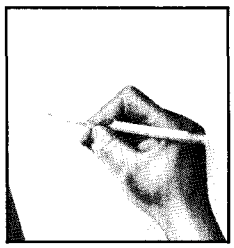
APRIL 24, 1989

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 3,875

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
MICHAEL KINSLEY (on leave)
Acting Editor
ROBERT WRIGHT
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN (on leave)
Acting Managing Editor
JAMES S. GIBNEY
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, HENDRIK HERTZBERG,
ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS,
MORTON M. KONDRACKE
New Republic Books Editor
(Basic Books)
BILL NEWLIN
Economics
ROBERT KUTTNER
Films STANLEY KAUFFMANN
Theater ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Poetry RICHARD HOWARD
Art MARK STEVENS
Architecture HERBERT MUSCHAMP
Contributing Editors
ROBERT COLES, HENRY FAIRLIE,
JAMES K. GLASSMAN,
CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER,
VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND,
ROBERT B. REICH, JONATHAN RIEDER,
MAGGIE SCARF, RONALD STEEL,
RICHARD L. STROUT, E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER,
NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN,
MICHAEL WALZER, C. VANN WOODWARD
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY
Production Manager
BRUCE STEINKE
Assistant Editor
LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Production Associate
ERIC V. PETERSON
Literary Assistant
SARA MOSLE
Reporter-Researchers
JAMES BENNET, ZACHARY CITRON,
JOHN HOOD, DAVID KURAPKA,
MICHAEL NEWMAN

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Associate Publisher
TOM HICKS
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Manager
JENNIFER BARRETT
Circulation Director
PATTY JONES
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Circulation Manager
KRISTIN CONRADI
Advertising Assistant
DARLENE BUSCAGLIO
Accounting Assistant
BEATE HERNANDEZ
Back Issues and Reception
MAXINE OAKLEY
Circulation Consultant
H. EDWARD YOUNG
Corporate Marketing
GUY STODDARD
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.



COVER by Yvonne Gensurowsky/ Stansbury, Ronsaville, Wood Inc. for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 15.

2 CORRESPONDENCE Mangled beyond repair, &c.

4 TRB FROM WASHINGTON **THAT'S OIL, FOLKS** Bush bunk about black gunk.

5 THE EDITORS **A DONE DEAL** How to make the Nicaragua accord the first step toward a coherent Central American policy.

6 NOTEBOOK Mickey Mouse, Lebanon, &c.

7 ROBERT BAZELL **SCIENCE AND SOCIETY: HYPE-ENERGY PHYSICS** Can two scientists and lots of press releases put Utah on the map?

8 FRED BARNES **WHITE HOUSE WATCH: NEWTERED** Bush will gladly let Newt Gingrich lead the way on legislative strategy.

10 GARY KRIST **POSTCARD GRENADA: CLUB-MED QUICKIE** America's ardor for Grenada has cooled. And vice versa.

11 MORTON M. KONDRACKE **JUST SAY YES** (to volunteer service).

13 ROBERT NAGEL **THE NO-BAIL SOLUTION** How to lock up a drug dealer tonight and still respect the Constitution in the morning.

15 JOSHUA HAMMER **CRAM SCAM** It's tough fighting a guerrilla war against the injustice of the SAT, but fame and fortune can take the sting out of it.

18 SLAVENKA DRAKULIĆ **GLASNOSTRADAMUS** Yugoslavia has seen the future of *glasnost*, and it's shaky.

20 JAMES BENNET **TIME OUT** Before Time and Warner create the largest communications company in the history of the universe, could we pause to ponder the implications?

24 STANLEY KAUFFMANN **ON FILMS: FACT-FACING** *Powwow Highway* is slow. *84 Charlie Mopic* adds little to the Vietnam documentary genre.

26 PAUL BERMAN **THE LAST NEW LEFTISTS** *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties* by Peter Collier and David Horowitz

34 MARY JO SALTER **SEEING AND BELIEVING** *Collected Works* by Flannery O'Connor, edited by Sally Fitzgerald

36 LINDA NOWLIN **POEM** *Revisiting Bonnard: The Nudes*

38 VERLYN KLINKENBORG **MR. MYTH** *The Lyre of Orpheus* by Robertson Davies

40 CHARLES LARMORE **TIME'S REASON** *Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History* by Ernest Gellner

43 WASHINGTON DIARIST **HUSHED PUPPIES**

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 200, Number 17, Issue 3,875, April 24, 1989. (Printed in the U.S. on April 5, 1989.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 9 & 16, July 17 & 24, Aug. 7 & 14, and Sept. 18 & 25, 1989) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $59.97; foreign, $89.97; Canada, $74.97. Back issues, $3.00 (includes postage & handling). ©1989 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-525-0643.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB FROM WASHINGTON

That's Oil, Folks

Why all the long faces? Let's talk about the oil that *hasn't* destroyed any pristine, irreplaceable, wildlife-rich, stunningly beautiful natural environments. Let's talk about the successes, not the failures. That's what Charles J. DiBona, president of the American Petroleum Institute, is doing. He's just distributed a press handout, "Questions and Answers On Alaskan Oil Spill." It ends this way:

> Q. Can you give us a guess as to how many tanker loadings there have been at the Port of Valdez in the 12 years it's been operating?
> A. According to the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, there have been 8,858 tanker loadings during this 12-year period, with 6.8 billion barrels transported out of the Port of Valdez. If you want the fraction of the oil that got into the water, you're talking about 240,000 barrels spilled out of 6.8 billion barrels transported—so it's one twenty-eight thousandth of the oil. That is a tremendous amount of oil moved out of there without incident—6.8 billion barrels have been moved out, and 240,000 barrels spilled, which is one barrel in 28,000.

One in 28,000 would be a pretty good failure rate for a condom manufacturer. It'd be spectacular for a method to prevent prisoner recidivism. But in fields like nuclear deterrence and ecological disaster prevention, one little mistake can spoil the whole darn program.

What is happening in Prince William Sound is a horrible catastrophe. The place looks even worse than Boston Harbor did in those Bush for President TV commercials.

Tens of thousands of oil-soaked birds and animals are dead or dying, but that's only the beginning. For example, most of Prince William's bald eagles, which is to say most of America's, will probably die because their oil-coated intestines can't absorb nutrition—a pathetic fate for a patriotic symbol even nobler than compulsory flag-pledging.

The cold has congealed the oil slick into a gummy mat that traps the lighter compounds such as benzene, which normally would evaporate, under the surface. They are now dissolving into the water, there to be ingested by zooplankton, the tiny animals that are the basis of the aquatic food chain. The poisoned plankton will carry death and disease all the way up the line.

Much of the shoreline will be rendered essentially lifeless. Prince William Sound is full of islands, coves, and inlets as ideal for trapping oil as they are for breeding fish. Some 800 miles of shore are already ankle-deep in a black-brown gunk that's much less appetizing than its name: "mousse." Ultimately, the length of ruined coastline will be as great as Long Island and Cape Cod combined—with Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and Kennebunkport tossed in for good measure.

So who ought to get the blame?

Start with Exxon, which made $5.3 billion in profits last year. Its chairman, Lawrence Rawl, is the kind of hard-driving dynamo who makes Wall Street hearts go pitter-pat. When Rawl moved into the big CEO's office, he got rid of his predecessor's shelves of books and replaced them with duck decoys. (These will presumably now have to be painted black for greater realism.) He also got rid of 80,000 of the company's 182,000 employees, including all—not some, all—of its oil spill specialists.

Then we have the good people of Alaska, who have consistently voted for pro-development candidates. Alaskans talk a lot about being self-reliant frontiersmen, but they've been on the take for years. When the oil money started rolling in, they abolished their income and sales taxes and set up a fund, now fattened to $10 billion from oil royalties, which sends a yearly check to every citizen of the state. No wonder they were so eager to believe the oil giants' assurances that nothing bad would ever happen.

But the biggest villains of all are the Republican politicians who, with occasional help from a few ersatz Democrats, created the conditions for this calamity.

The whole Valdez pipeline-tanker project was conceived in sin. In 1973 a titanic congressional battle climaxed in a 49-49 vote in the Senate. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew broke the tie in favor of Valdez and against the environmentalists' alternative, which was not to prevent the extraction of Alaska's oil but simply to send it via pipeline across Canada, thus eliminating the danger of tanker spills—a danger the oil lobbyists and their Republican friends scoffed at.

The scoffing continued for 16 years. As recently as three days before the disaster, Senator Frank Murkowski, Alaska Republican and oil lobby shill, defending the Bush administration's plan to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, wrote in *USA Today*: "Alarmists say Alaska's environment would be destroyed if the refuge is explored. Twenty years ago, they sounded the same alarm against the Alaska pipeline—and they were proved wrong."

Under Ronald Reagan, the budget cuts needed to finance a tax holiday for the rich meant, to take one small example, that the Coast Guard had to curtail its activities in Prince William Sound. The Guard's old radar system would have spotted the tanker heading for the reef; the new one didn't have enough range. More broadly, the Reagan administration's contribution to the debacle consisted of eight years of disdain for environmentalism, hatred of "government," and worship of "the market." Fuel economy standards were relaxed. Conservation and alternative energy programs were eliminated. Any notion of taxing gasoline more steeply than the current 29 cents a gallon (as against $1.61 in Japan, $2.44 in France, and $3.31 in Italy) was ruled out. Oil imports, unsurprisingly, climbed all the way back to 1973 levels.

And President Bush, who had ridiculed environmentalism during the campaign by repeatedly making an idiotic joke about caribou rubbing up against the Alaska pipeline? For three days after the spill, nothing. On the fourth day, he went to the White House press room and was asked if he had changed his views on the Arctic Refuge. He said, "No. I see no connection." On the seventh day, he told an audience of journalists, "I think most people are reasonable enough and fair enough to look back at the record over the years in terms of the pipeline and found there had been very little damage, if any. Certainly there's been no lasting environmental damage." Then he unveiled this corker: "So what you do is do the best you can, express the genuine concern that you feel on the environment—and I do feel a concern—but not take irresponsible action to guard against an incident of this nature."

Really, this is beneath contempt. At no point has Bush recognized, let alone expressed, the public's indignation and grief about what has happened. At no point has he shown the slightest awareness that there is a common good at stake and that he has a duty to pursue it. And of course he has done nothing at all. Exxon, whose primary responsibility is to its stockholders, remains in charge of the cleanup.

Bush has had the nerve to compare himself, as an environmentalist, to Theodore Roosevelt. From Bull Moose to Bush Mousse: a sad decline.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC
APRIL 24, 1989

A DONE DEAL

Mikhail Gorbachev has come to Cuba and gone, and not much has changed, except that the three network anchormen have slightly darker suntans. It has become customary to expect Gorbachev to alter the terms of political discourse every time he speaks before a world audience, but this time he didn't. There was no dramatic Latin American peace plan, no clear hint of new leverage on Soviet allies in the Western Hemisphere. Gorbachev sounded less anti-American than Cuba would have liked and more pro-Cuban than America would have liked—but that's the way he's sounded for some time now.

So discussion of Latin American policy resumes where it left off—with the Nicaragua accord worked out recently between the administration and Congress. It's hard to argue with that accord, in part because of the company that would put us in. Only the most rabid right-wingers in Washington—Patrick Buchanan, Howard Phillips, etc.—are quarreling with the basic terms of the deal. Even former Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams—not a Communist sympathizer, last time we checked—is defending it. And Abrams's designated successor, Bernard Aronson, also a long-time friend of the *contras*, helped negotiate it.

Sure, it's always natural to wonder whether a deal engineered by Secretary of State James Baker isn't too finely tailored to the politics of the day, with insufficient attention to longer-term calculations and timeless principles. Still, the plan has the potential to work—more potential, at least, than any other plan that political reality will now permit. But that potential can't be realized without sustained and painstaking effort on the part of the administration. And, more to the point, making the deal work is but one step toward an effective Latin American policy.

The Baker deal calls for Congress to give the *contras* $4.5 million a month in non-lethal aid through February 1990—when the Sandinista regime is supposed to hold elections—with the understanding that the guerrillas will remain in their bases in Honduras or return to Nicaragua to engage in peaceful political activity. The agreement keeps the *contras* alive and theoretically capable of returning to combat if the Sandinistas renege on their promises to permit free democratic expression. But the administration paid a price for this leverage: it agreed that this November, if any one of four congressional committee chairmen fails to certify in writing that President Bush is making a good-faith effort to settle our differences with Nicaragua diplomatically, the aid will be cut off.

This provision warrants the worries that it has generated. First, it is a questionable precedent for the president to give veto power over his foreign policy to congressional committee chairmen. It's not unconstitutional, since the veto is informal—written not into law, but into a "gentlemen's agreement." Still, it's a limitation on presidential power that Congress certainly will try to replicate in some other context. Second, the agreement calls for the president to suspend funding of the *contras* if the letters don't arrive in November. This amounts to an impoundment of appropriated funds, much like one that was declared unconstitutional during the Nixon administration.

These worries aside, the administration's strategy in Central America can advance America's interests, fostering democracy and thwarting communism, if it is vigorously pursued. But if it is not, the Sandinistas will consolidate their hold in Nicaragua, and their Communist allies may succeed in toppling the flawed and fragile regime in El Salvador.

The Soviet Union claims to have sworn off spreading revolutions around the world (a claim repeated by Gorbachev in Cuba), but Cuba has not. In fact, Castro, as a matter of habit, cannot. So a failure of American policy would pose a danger to other nations in the region, including Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica. Castro already has an ally in Panama's Manuel Noriega, who, in turn, is linked to the drug traffickers threatening to take effective power in Colombia and other nations in South America.

So what's to be done? Ideally, we would get the Soviet Union to cut off military aid to Nicaragua and force Nicaragua and Cuba to cut off aid to left-wing guerrillas in El Salvador. Failing that, we should remember that our best weapon against communism in both El Salvador and Nicaragua is democracy. Nicaragua has to be pressured by every possible means to hold free elections and it must suffer the consequences if it fails to. Deprived of military aid by Congress, the *contras* cannot pressure the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sandinistas the way they once did. But the Reagan administration's policy did succeed in weakening the Sandinistas economically and politically, rendering them vulnerable to other sorts of pressure. The country is destitute and the regime is unpopular. Even Europe has soured on the Sandinistas, and with the *contras* on the sidelines, European nations might conceivably join the United States in imposing economic sanctions if the Sandinistas fail to hold elections.

Diplomatic and political pressure also can be applied by Nicaragua's immediate neighbors in Central America. This is a good chance for Oscar Arias to earn his prematurely awarded Nobel Prize. Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela, who helped the Sandinistas topple Somoza, and who now realizes that he helped create a monster, can also apply diplomatic and economic pressure. And Mexico, under President Carlos Salinas, can work on the Sandinistas to open political space for their democratic opposition.

The administration wisely has moved to cut off funds formerly supplied to *contra* political leaders for organizing outside Nicaragua and is encouraging them to return home and fight for freedom there. This is risky. They may be beaten, jailed, or even killed. But others have faced this danger—*contra* soldiers and the internal opposition, which has heroically been trying to publish newspapers, organize unions, and maintain political parties—while their leaders have been enjoying a comparatively safe life in Miami.

Congressional Democrats have a crucial role to play. This policy is what they've always said they wanted: the diplomatic route. Now it's time for the key opponents of *contra* aid—Jim Wright and David Bonior come to mind, plus activists like Gary Studds, Edward Markey, and Senator Chris Dodd—to remind Daniel Ortega persistently that this is his chance: let the democratic opposition speak freely and campaign freely—or else. Or else what? Or else the *contras* may be back. Bonior and Dodd would choke before voting to renew lethal aid, but if they believe in democracy, the least they can do is try a convincing bluff.

Many of the same congressional liberals have held the Sandinistas to a permissive standard of human rights, but have rigorously imposed a high standard on Salvador's elected government. Now a newly elected right-wing government has taken over in El Salvador and must show whether it can deliver on its promise to avoid a return to the bloodshed of the early 1980s. Congress has to give it at least a chance, by sustaining current economic and military aid levels and not giving in to temptations to cut or condition aid to the incoming regime of President Alfredo Cristiani.

The administration, for its part, needs to take the initiative right now—and at a high level—to convince the military, the right wing, and the judiciary that the United States won't tolerate abuses like the one in early April, when a judge let off several military officers who ran a ring that kidnapped rich industrialists for ransom. The administration has a delicate task ahead: to convince the U.S. public and Congress to stick with El Salvador for the long, hard slog toward real democracy—a slow but thorough transformation of that violent society—while at the same time convincing right-wingers that our patience for abuse is limited. This will be a real test of James Baker's political skills.

There is other work to be done in the region. Panama holds elections in early May that Noriega almost certainly will steal—violently, if necessary. The Bush administration should support the opposition and elevate the visibility of the contest to expose Noriega's ruthlessness anew, and it should set about to topple him if it can. How? The Reagan administration tried to encourage a coup but failed miserably. It also resorted to economic sanctions that hurt only the middle class, our natural allies. Assassination is illegal, but U.S. intelligence assets ought to be deployed carefully and patiently in hopes that at some point Noriega can be grabbed and brought to the United States for trial on drug-trafficking charges. Easier said than done? Of course.

Meanwhile, we should work to reduce the debt burden of nations all over Latin America, and to lower trade barriers. We should let Salvadoran refugees stay in the United States and return remittances to sustain the country's economy. And in Honduras and Guatemala—and elsewhere in Latin America—we should increase our training programs in democracy for trade unionists, bureaucrats, journalists, and politicians, perhaps even founding a hemispheric democracy institute to parallel the military command schools we have long used to train Latin American officers. Secretary Baker's Nicaragua plan is fine as far as it goes, but it won't go very far by itself.

NOTEBOOK

JUST FRIENDS: Despite the newsmagazines' vaunted separation of church (editorial) and state (advertising), these two spheres sometimes miraculously align. The April 3 issue of *Newsweek* featured a cover story on "Mickey's New Magic" that described works in progress at Disney World. (A mere two days after the magazine hit the newsstand, Disney was running commercials displaying the *Newsweek* cover.) And the April 10 *Newsweek* carried a three-page ad insert from—yes—the folks at Disney. Readers might wonder at this coincidence were the article not such a tough, no-holds-barred profile. For example, *Newsweek* called Disney World "a kind of warp zone of warmth and family values, similar to the Thanksgiving-dinner table. . . ." The magazine saved its toughest stuff for Disney chairman and CEO Michael Eisner: "surprisingly tall . . . still boyishly affable," "always energetic, family-oriented," "so un-prima donna-ish," and "more *Walt* than Walt." This "huggable CEO" proved his own worst critic: "He's not too good to be true, he insists. . . ." Thank God that, as Time and Warner merge, we can still count on *Newsweek*'s fiercely independent voice.

EYELESS IN BEIRUT: If you depended, as, alas, millions do, on Peter Jennings for your news—or, for that matter, on his competitors—you would not be likely to know that Beirut has for weeks been going through

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

what Reuters news agency called "one of the most ferocious barrages of the 14 years of periodic civil strife in Lebanon." The lack of interest on the part of Jennings and others in the media, including the prestige press, can be traced to the fact that Jews are not the ones doing the killing. When that happens it provides opportunities for sustained and somewhat hysterical attention and accompanying high-dudgeon outrage, the stuff of morality plays. On these occasions Jennings musters a peculiarly haughty sneer, much in evidence since the *intifada* began in December 1987 and, of course, throughout the 1982 Lebanon war. Some observers sympathetically explained Jennings's relentless and unprofessional hectoring of the Israelis at that time as an expression of the fidelity he felt for Beirut, where he had lived for several years. But his neglect of that city's recent agonies rather undercuts this interpretation. He is as intrinsically interested in the Beirutis as he is in the Aborigines. His interest, his hostile interest, like that of others in the trade, is in Israel. Which is why when Arabs rain high-explosive death on other Arabs, even in mind-numbing numbers, no one seems to take much notice, certainly not Peter Jennings. Right now it is the Syrian occupation army and its allied Druze militia that, without even the pretense of military targeting, have been bombarding schools, hospitals, apartment houses, and factories in an effort to terrorize Christian East Beirut into submission to Damascus. Early last month two warring Christian factions put the same neighborhoods through an only marginally less intensive fratricide. Maybe Arabs murdering Arabs is boring, if only because it is so routine. But the innocent dead demand some respect: in these two Arab slaughters in one month in one part of Beirut surely more innocents have died than during the entire 16 months of the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza. There may, moreover, be an American interest or two at stake. But none of this cuts much ice with the 7 o'clock people. There is only so much time that television news can dedicate to the Middle East. Sorry, Mr. Jennings and the others have already reserved that slot for the brutal Israeli soldier who can be counted on to shoot back at a Palestinian mob that is trying to kill him with rocks and gasoline bombs.

TAKING LIBERTIES:

Bennett says he'd defend civil liberties

—*Houston Chronicle*, March 2

Bennett sees limiting liberties in drug war

—same paper, next day

(thanks to Chiarizio & Brewton, Houston, Texas)

CARROT AND STICK:

Eastern chief pleads for pilots to return

—*Denver Post*, March 6

Eastern tells striking pilots: Return or else

—*Boulder Daily Camera*, same day

(thanks to Michael Parker, Nederland, Colorado)

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

HYPE-ENERGY PHYSICS

By Robert Bazell

"We don't know that it is fusion," Dr. Stanley Pons admitted. That was a week after the University of Utah's press release had unequivocally proclaimed that Pons and a colleague, Dr. Martin Fleischmann, had "created a sustained nuclear fusion reaction at room temperature." The breakthrough, continued the release with full sense of the historic moment, "means the world may someday rely on fusion for a clean, virtually inexhaustible source of energy."

If the experiment did indeed produce large amounts of fusion energy, the press release wasn't exaggerating its importance. But Fleischmann and Pons may in the end turn out to have produced a whimper, not a bang. In any event, the university and the scientists released the experimental results in a way that maximized publicity but defied the conventions that are supposed to ensure the reliability of scientific information. Apparently eager to gain recognition, they didn't take the simplest steps to try to determine whether what they were saying was true. And University of Utah officials, imbued with that state's unique blend of chauvinism and xenophobia, were not only happy to play along but encouraged them.

It's not impossible that Fleischmann and Pons are right. Fleischmann, after all, is a world-renowned chemist at the University of Southampton, England. Pons, on the Utah faculty, is his former student. Most other scientists doubt the two men have done what they claim, but no scientist will reject it out of hand until the actual work is available for review.

At first that was impossible. While Pons and Fleischmann trumpeted their results to a crowd of reporters, they were coy about telling colleagues what they had done. They put off scientists who telephoned. Those who appeared in Salt Lake City were allowed to look briefly at an unpublished paper, but not to copy it. Asked about this secretiveness, Pons says there was a need to protect pending patents. It was, however, necessary to talk to the popular press, he says, because word of the experiments was about to appear in the *Financial Times* of London and the *Wall Street Journal*, and he saw the need to "clarify" what he had done. It was also necessary, he said, to use the media to warn other scientists that the experiment could be dangerous. (Kids, don't try this at home!)

Dr. Chase Peterson, president of the University of Utah and the official who ultimately decided to hold the press conference, gave me one other reason: the need to establish Utah's "primacy." Peterson, a former faculty

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

member of the Harvard Medical School, clearly hopes that the experiment will enhance the image of both his native state and his university, an image he says is distorted by the "insularity of the coastal regions." The world "doesn't see this as Berkeley or Stanford or MIT," Peterson correctly noted. As for the state, "The world's view of Utah is a funny one. What do you think of when you hear Oregon? Douglas fir trees, I guess. Maine? Probably lobsters or the coastline. But the views of Utah have been kind of bizarre lately," he said, referring to events involving the Mormon Church. "Murders, thefts of forged documents."

The jury is still out on the announcement's effect on Utah's image, but it certainly lifted local pride. A *Deseret News* headline said the experiment could rank as "the century's greatest achievement." The newspaper predicted Pons could take a place in history alongside Newton, Einstein, and Edison. On a more temporal plane, Utah governor Norm Bangerter summoned the legislature into special session to allocate $5 million for fusion research. And Utah native James Fletcher, who is retiring as NASA administrator, announced he will head a new Fusion Research Institute at the university.

Eight days after the press conference, fax machines in laboratories around the world spewed out details of the experiment. Someone had gotten hold of a paper submitted by Pons and Fleischmann to the *Journal of Electroanalytical Chemistry and Interfacial Electrochemistry* (an obscure periodical even by academic standards) and quickly disseminated it. With the details in hand, the scientists renewed their efforts to duplicate the Utah results. As of this writing, there has been no clear-cut success. The experiment looks amazingly simple, especially compared with the multimillion-dollar machines physicists have been using to try to produce fusion in the laboratory. (The assumption has been that heating things up to an enormous temperature—as in the sun, the big fusion reactor in the sky—was essential for a sustained fusion reaction, whereas the Utah scientists worked at room temperature.) In glass tubes about a foot tall and an inch in diameter, Pons and Fleischmann have inserted two wires, one made of platinum, the other of palladium. The tubes are filled with "heavy" water containing a form of hydrogen called deuterium, or "heavy" hydrogen. The scientists ran an electric current through the wires, causing the water to bubble. Their theory is that the current also causes hydrogen atoms to pack into the palladium so tightly that they fuse together inside the metal.

In Pons's laboratory, the untrained eye can see that some of the tubes are producing heat. But is it fusion? One hallmark of a fusion reaction is the release of neutrons. Pons says he has detected neutrons, but there are a billion times too few to account for the heat. He said it "may be some type of thermonuclear reaction we don't understand." Dr. Ron Parker, head of MIT's fusion lab, says, "If there is a thermonuclear reaction, it will release some signature—neutrons, gamma rays, something which can be measured." He says it would take a few days or at most weeks to take such measurements with the right equipment. Several major labs have the equipment and would have been (and still are) willing to help take the measurements. Pons, Fleischmann, and the University of Utah could have made the measurements and found out what, if anything, their experiment proves, before proclaiming that they had accomplished the 20th-century equivalent of turning lead into gold. The glory that awaits them if they are correct would still have been theirs. And they would have avoided the ridicule that surely will follow if they are wrong. ●

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

NEWTERED

By Fred Barnes

One of President Bush's recent soirees didn't turn out quite like he had planned. He had gathered a dozen Republican senators and House members in the Cabinet Room for a private unveiling of the administration's child-care proposal. Without applying any pressure, he got several Republicans to sign on as co-sponsors of the bill. But that didn't end the conversation. Bush sat between Senator Pete Domenici of New Mexico and Representative Tom Tauke of Iowa, and they gave him the bad news. His approach—tax credits for parents, whether or not they work—has all the right principles, they told Bush, but it won't fly in Congress. It's too cheap. So Domenici and Tauke would be offering a bill of their own. It would cost $2.5 billion the first year, compared with the $500 million proposed by Bush. The president spoke up. His bill was better, he said, partly because it won't bloat the deficit. Richard Darman, Bush's budget chief, echoed the president. But in the end, Bush all but acquiesced. He didn't sign off on the Domenici-Tauke bill, but he didn't protest too loudly either.

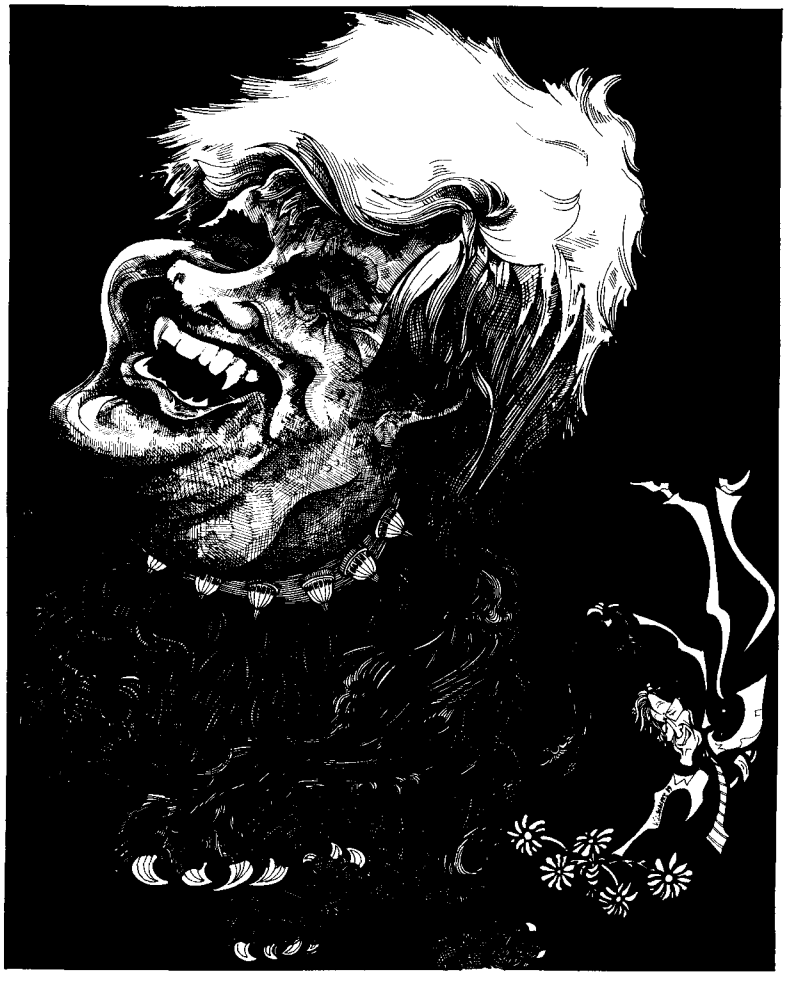
That session gives a pretty good picture of how legislative strategy is made at the Bush White House. There's give-and-take with congressional Republicans, especially take. It's not like it was back in Ronald Reagan's era. In Reagan's first term, a group of senior White House aides (Darman was the moving force) plotted legislative strategy with a single goal in mind, prevailing over congressional Democrats to enact conservative programs. Details changed from bill to bill, but the strategy was invariably to put together a conservative majority of Republicans and right-wing Democrats. White House aides spent their time scheming to build that majority. If they got input from congressional Republicans, fine. If not, that was fine, too. The White House was firmly in charge.

No more. Bush is desperate for advice from Republicans on Capitol Hill (he also listens to advice from Democrats, but this is diplomacy, not strategy). And no wonder. His situation is a lot more difficult than Reagan's. He lacks a broad agenda with popular support,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and there are more Democrats on Capitol Hill to contend with. Thus, says John Sununu, the White House chief of staff, "Each issue has a very different kind of appropriate interaction between the White House and Congress." That means Bush is free to concoct a new strategy for each issue, which is exactly what he's doing.

Even as a lame duck in 1988, Reagan was eager to forge a conservative majority in Congress. (His last major fling at this—to get military aid for the *contras*—he lost.) But relying on a conservative majority is the farthest thing from Bush's mind. Asked to name proposals on which Bush hopes to provoke sharp conservative-liberal cleavage, a White House strategist said, "I can't think of any." The one that comes to my mind, getting non-lethal aid for the *contras* without making any concessions to liberal Democrats, was rejected by Bush and Secretary of State James Baker. White House officials insist that this wouldn't have worked—that they wouldn't have gotten a dime from Congress, that compromise was the only way to get food and beer money to keep the *contras* alive in Honduras.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Settling for this was made easier by the fact that Bush isn't an ideological person. Compromise and friendly relations with Congress make him feel good. More important, he's bent on burnishing his image as a conciliator. Under Bush, says GOP Representative Vin Weber of Minnesota, "We're going to have the inverse of the good cop/bad cop that existed under Reagan." Reagan was the bad cop, an inflexible partisan who went directly to the people through television and alienated nearly every Democrat on Capitol Hill. His aides and Republican leaders in Congress would follow behind with conciliatory words and talk of compromise. Bush, in contrast, is the good cop. He goes for weeks without saying an unkind word about Congress. He's got bad cops on his team—Vice President Dan Quayle, Sununu, Republican national chairman Lee Atwater, and now Newt Gingrich, the new House Republican whip.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, Bush was delighted with Gingrich's election. When he got the word on March 23, he was in Wilmington, Delaware, for a speech. He called Gingrich immediately from a holding room. "This is great," he said. Bush meant it, a White House official said. "He was excited. What Bush likes about Gingrich is the fighter in him and the fact that he's got ideas. They're progressive conservative ideas. The president likes his ability to be a compassionate conservative." And as Bush's bad cop, Gingrich is perfect. He can be a team player and a bomb thrower at the same time. As Bush said at a lunch with reporters in late March: "He's got his style and I got mine."

The arrival of Gingrich makes possible something entirely new in Bush legislative strategy: leadership by congressional Republicans. Gingrich is brimming with strategic advice. He's been dispensing it for months to journalists and administration officials willing to walk with him on the Mall in the morning between 6 and 7:30. Now he'll be in White House strategy meetings. "The point is, the presidency is so obsessed with the management of huge issues—foreign policy, keeping the Federal Reserve from causing a recession, the budget," says Weber. "The White House will look to Congress for leadership on that whole second tier of issues that make up the domestic agenda. It's not a slap in the face of the White House to suggest that." Even if it were, Gingrich would be willing.

In any case, how the White House will tilt on an issue won't be that hard to figure out. Three factors are influential: what happened to the issue in Congress last year, what the president said about it in the campaign, and what Bush's current political situation is in regard to the issue. Take mandatory parental leave, an issue that Senate Democrats put on their freshly minted agenda. It failed to get through Congress in 1988, an election year, which means it's not an unassailable issue. As a candidate, Bush said he opposes forcing businesses to give leaves to mothers or fathers with a baby. He wants to encourage businesses to grant leaves voluntarily. And finally, Bush doesn't stand to gain anything politically by agreeing to mandatory leave. So the Bush position,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unstated but clear, is that he'll veto a mandatory leave bill. Gingrich will be comfortable with that.

Or take raising the minimum wage, which has been $3.35 an hour since 1980. Democrats tried to pass a hike last year, but failed. Still, Bush declared in the campaign that he'd go along with a raise. As president, he proposed a boost to $4.25 over three years on the condition that a subminimum "training" wage be created for workers in their first six months on the job. This insulated Bush from the charge that he's a heartless proponent of coolie wages. But it also gave him the leeway to take a hard line, demonstrating that Democrats can't push him around; he declared he'd veto anything more lavish than his proposal. White House lobbyists thought they could attract enough votes in the House to pass a $4.25 minimum wage with only a three-month training wage. But "that would have put us in the trap of saying we'd do one thing, then doing another," said an aide. The White House said no, and Bush settled for 196 votes against the Democratic measure ($4.55), enough to sustain a veto.

On the minimum wage, the strategy was well crafted. But sometimes White House strategizing has a seat-of-the-pants quality. Sununu and other White House aides talk about Bush's four principles for judging a child-care bill (things like a focus on the poor and no discrimination against church-run facilities). Where'd these come from? Well, Larry Lindsey, a Harvard economics professor on the domestic policy staff, read through all of Bush's speeches on child care last year and came up with them. They've become official policy. To Bush's chagrin, Domenici and Tauke assured him that their bill complied with all four.

POSTCARD GRENADA

CLUB-MED QUICKIE

By Gary Krist

March 13 marked the tenth anniversary of the Grenadian revolution, and what remains of organized leftism down here—now shambling along under the banner of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement—saluted the date with a three-day conference plus evening rally. Given that the revolution ended abruptly in 1983 with the assassination of Prime Minister Bishop by members of his own People's Revolutionary Government (followed by the sudden arrival of uniformed visitors from up north), holding such an event might seem a little like throwing an anniversary party for a couple whose marriage ended in a swift and brutal divorce. But no one in the MBPM seemed bothered by the awkwardness of celebrating a revolution that had, in timeworn fashion, devoured its own children. Apparently the five-and-a-half-year mark is when nostalgia sets in.

Then again, maybe people were just distracted by that Yankee warship in the harbor. Yes, by one of those amazing coincidences that seem to cluster around the doings of the American military, the USS *Harlan County*, a 522-foot tank-landing ship, had arrived on the morning of the rally to pay a courtesy call. The crewmen, you see, were scheduled to participate in a basketball tournament against several local teams. But everyone here assumed that the Navy had come to play hardball, not roundball.

Even with the prow of the *Harlan County* pointed toward Market Square, however, the MBPM would have merely spun its rhetorical wheels that Monday night had it not been for certain other provocations. The Grenadian police chose that evening to "halt the flow of drugs through the island" by stopping and searching cars on their way into St. George's, creating massive traffic jams in the process. Still more irksome was the government's expulsion of several of the movement's foreign guests before they could attend the conference. Among them was Steve Clarke, the American director of Pathfinder Press, who also had several cartons of books (*Maurice Bishop Speaks*, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, etc.) confiscated at the airport. This provided a nice hook for many of the speeches at the rally. "If Ronald Reagan printed a book today, you could get it in Grenada tomorrow," said one speaker, "but you can't buy Maurice Bishop's ideas."

Not that most Grenadians would necessarily *want* to buy Bishop's ideas. Despite a lingering affection for "our slain Brother Maurice," the political philosophy he represented remains thoroughly discredited down here. True, the government of Herbert Blaize and his conservative New National Party has hardly been an unmitigated success, but it hasn't generated the kind of bitter resentment that caused the downfall of the extravagantly corrupt right-wing regime of Sir Eric Gairy in 1979. In fact, the NNP has rather more to fear from the right these days than from the left—though that may change if it continues to provide the left with tailor-made issues like police harassment and state censorship.

In any case, reports of rampant pro-Americanism in Grenada have been grossly exaggerated. This I can assert with some confidence, having arrived expecting to be loved for my passport and instead finding myself treated like a narc at a disco. Where is that island full of smiling, happy Reaganites I read about in *Esquire*? Granted, a majority of Grenadians welcomed the American invasion back in 1983. No one denies this, not even the two former Bishop security men who have been showing me around. But now the party's over, and a lot of the smugly reported graffiti of five years ago ("Thank you USA for liberating us! KGB Behave!") is starting to take on a worn, faded look. Recent wall scrawlings are more likely to say things like "Reagan is the world terror No. 1! NNP is real bad!" And the most flattering description of George Bush I've heard so far came from someone who described him as "just another Ronald Reagan, only not as aggressive."

Meanwhile, we rank-and-file Americans have to suffer

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the consequences of the falling off of Grenadian affection. An American photographer I know has had nearly all of his attempts to record the daily lives of Grenadians met with streams of colorful but unprintable verbal abuse. To put it mildly, our presence here—particularly in the poorer western and northwestern sections of the island—no longer occasions the universal adoration that is supposed to be our due as heroic champions of democracy.

The reason for our cool reception is not entirely clear, but it seems to have less to do with our invasion/imperialist rescue/adventure mission itself than with the follow-up. That vast flood of American investment in Grenada, much anticipated in the years following the invasion, has not materialized. Although the Agency for International Development has helped build some dandy roads and a nice mental hospital on a hill below Fort George (presumably to replace the one we accidentally bombed), U.S. companies have overwhelmingly decided that wonderful opportunities lie elsewhere. And now that Uncle Sam is starting to cut back on the economic aid (to a still hefty $10 million a year, after pumping $110 million into the country over five years), people are getting the impression that Grenada, having served its public relations function, will now be cast aside like a jilted lover. And to be honest, who can blame them? What started out as a marriage made in heaven has begun to look more like a one-night stand.

Although the hoteliers and government functionaries keep assuring us that all is well, it's clear that everything in York House is not as the Bush administration would have it. New elections must be called sometime before March 1990, and they promise to be messy at the very least. For one thing, there's been a highly disruptive split in the hierarchy of the ruling NNP, known to many these days as the New National Problem. In January Keith Mitchell, a minister in Blaize's government, was elected party leader, a position that would normally be held by the PM himself. Meanwhile, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the official opposition party, is leading in what pass for opinion polls in this country. To this must be added the lingering (and, to some, bewildering) popularity of Sir Eric Gairy and his Grenadian United Labor Party (that's right, GULP), the persistent rumblings of the MBPM, and the recent formation of yet another political party by former Gairy protégé Raphael Fletcher. No wonder our State Department observers—who can be distinguished from the other sunglassed, straw-hatted tourists by their nervous eyes and sweaty palms—are on edge. Just keeping the parties' acronyms straight is a tough enough chore, especially for us Americans, who tend to reserve our acronyms for truly powerful entities like television networks and ad agencies.

The newspapers don't help much, either. About a half-dozen weeklies, most of them organs of the political parties, are published on the island, but they are pretty much innocent of facts. Even the major unaffiliated paper, *The Informer* ("The Fearless Weekly That Tells It As It Is"), has its lapses. "KEITH MITCHELL KILLED," ran one headline not too long ago. No, this was not hard news, but rather a vision received "in the wee hours" by a prophet named Justine F. McBurnie.

So pity those poor State Department observers. They have to make sense of all this and decide whom the United States should root for in the coming elections. Grenada, after all, is still regarded as a Caribbean bellwether, and the prospect of political chaos should give the State Department a few wee-hours visions of its own.

GARY KRIST is the author of *The Garden State* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), a collection of short fiction.

Uncle Sam needs you.

JUST SAY YES

By Morton M. Kondracke

Within the Washington Beltway, it's fashionable to smirk at George Bush's vows to make this a kinder, gentler nation with the help of "a thousand points of light" and little or no new money. In Washington, if a program doesn't have big bucks behind it, it's "just p.r."

So there may be big yawns during White House-designated "national service week" in mid-April, when Bush unveils his low-budget (reportedly, $25 million per year) Youth Engaged in Service (YES) program, designed to encourage both well-off and poor kids to join volunteer local projects to help the needy. Bush will mount his bully pulpit and promise that this is just the first of many innovations to come from his new White House Office of National Service, but almost certainly, the YES initiative will be greeted by snorts of contempt from jaded souls in Congress and the media.

And yet, philosophically, Bush is on to something important that's stirring in America, and he should be ambitious about its possibilities. It could be that the plight of homeless families didn't mesh with Ronald Reagan's woozy image of America as a great and noble land, and that this fact has dawned on more and more Americans. Or it could be that yuppies have discovered that BMWs don't offer the inner fulfillment promised in magazine ads. But there exists an abundance of evidence that the country is in the midst of a new surge of communitarianism—albeit, conservative communitarianism—that expresses itself not in '60s-style mass protest, but in locally based volunteer activity.

According to a 1988 Gallup Poll commissioned by Independent Sector, a Washington group representing non-profit agencies, more than 80 million Americans volunteer some of their time to a cause, and the average time spent is five hours per week for a total of 19.5 billion hours in 1987, a 34 percent increase since 1985. The Campus Outreach Opportunity League Compact, a nationwide consortium of 500 colleges, has about 250,000 students engaged in volunteer service activity. Half of all private high schools in the country

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

already require some community service, and the trend is spreading to public high schools. Atlanta, Detroit, and Springfield, Massachusetts, require service as a condition for graduating. The governors of Pennsylvania and Minnesota are pushing statewide programs to give graduation credits for service work; Maryland already requires all schools to do so. In addition, New York City, Philadelphia, and the state of California have created service corps on the model of the Job Corps or the Civilian Conservation Corps, mainly enrolled in by poor high school dropouts.

And there is both an expansion of adult volunteer activity and an increase in its fashionability quotient. In New York, 21 wealthy businessmen—including investment bankers Felix Rohatyn and Peter Flanigan—have followed Eugene Lang's much-publicized example in "adopting" a class of poor sixth-graders, guaranteeing to send them to college if they finish high school and establishing $250,000 funds to hire full-time coordinators to look after their adoptees' social welfare and educational needs. Financier Ray Chambers, chairman of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Newark, has persuaded 1,100 corporate executives to serve as mentors for impoverished kids and guarantee them a college education. The Habitat for Humanity program has inspired volunteers—the most famous being Jimmy Carter—in 300 cities to build houses for poor people, who own them after paying a small fee and investing "sweat equity" in finishing the property. Atlanta has created the Cities and Schools program, under which community leaders coordinate the delivery of school, health, and social agency services to poor families and organize mentor programs for children.

There are, in reality, millions of points of light already illuminating America—in homeless shelters, foster homes for AIDS babies, soup kitchens, tutoring programs, food delivery services, emergency hotlines, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, church outreach programs, and settlement houses. Will this end poverty and establish justice in the country? Of course not. But then government programs have not done so either. Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty was a noble cause, but it became bureaucratized and lost its popular consensus. If there is ever to be a consensus again behind efforts to help the poor, it will have to come—or, at least, is most likely to come—from sustained human contact between middle-class voters (and rich people, too) and individual poor people.

How much of this Bush has thought through is not clear. Obviously, though, the idea of community service fits nicely with his personality and his Brahmin sense of public obligation. He devoted fully a third of his inaugural address—the first third—to communitarian, service-oriented declarations, and the theme comes up often in other speeches. In St. Louis on February 17, for example, Bush said, "When I talk about a thousand points of light, it is neighbor helping neighbor, it is kid helping kid, it is friends holding out their hands to other friends. From now on in America, any definition of a successful life must include serving others."

Although as president he will be the nation's foremost advocate of voluntary action, Bush was far from the first major politician to understand the virtues of the volunteer ethic. The earlier advocates have been Democrats—notably, Sam Nunn and other leaders of the Democratic Leadership Council, who have promoted a huge (minimum: $5.3 billion per year) and controversial national service idea that would replace existing college grant programs with vouchers that young people would earn by performing two years of civilian or military service. The program's supporters dismiss Bush's efforts as an outgrowth of mere noblesse oblige. They assert that theirs is a "society-changing proposal" like the GI Bill, "a national mobilization, creating almost a whole new culture" in which service would be a natural part of growing up, and then of adult citizenship.

Nunn's measure is not going to be passed anytime soon—and it shouldn't be. There are many reasons to doubt that it will work. Clearly, its burdens will fall heaviest on the poor, who will have to do community service in order to afford a college education. It's supposed to encourage young people to join the military, but it will also encourage them to leave after two years to collect their vouchers (also redeemable to buy a house or get job training). So much attention has been paid to designing incentives that too little attention has been paid to the costs and problems of supervising and usefully employing volunteers.

One should also be suspicious of the DLC's urgent (and admitted) search for a big new idea that might revive the Democratic Party. The idea of "shared civic obligation" sounds good, but Nunn and company have not explained how incentives based on coercion and the promise of payment will create a national sense of community. Previous mass mobilizations—military service during wartime and the cold war, and the civil rights and anti-war movements—grew out of a widely shared consensus about national life. The DLC plan seems to be an effort to create a new ethos artificially, when it's clear that a natural movement already exists but is headed in a different direction—toward genuinely voluntary service on the part of individuals. The state should encourage this, not force it.

This spirit does inform a number of other Democratic proposals, including that of Senator Edward Kennedy to establish a $100 million national-state fund to promote volunteer youth service and to help create more local jobs corps. Senator Barbara Mikulski has sponsored a $250 million proposal to create a civilian volunteer corps, modeled on the National Guard, that would pay participants $3,000 a year in education or home-purchase benefits in return for service on weekends and two weeks in the summer. Senator Chris Dodd has a $150 million bill to fund an American Conservation Corps.

Republicans have been waiting—some impatiently—for the Bush initiative. It's being worked out by a 39-year-old businessman, Gregg Petersmeyer, who is brand new to the fields of volunteer service and poverty-fighting. A personal friend of Bush's since his days as a college intern in the Nixon White House, Petersmeyer has put himself through a crash course on America's social problems. He is also taking advice from a "Points of Light Initiative" working group headed by Ray

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chambers and including, among others, Flanigan and the originators of Habitat for Humanity and Atlanta's Cities and Schools effort.

That group also is being advised by Richard Danzig, a Washington lawyer and co-author of a book on national service, who says that the key to a successful national effort may lie in stimulating the local organization of "teams" of young people and adults, linking churches, corporations, and schools. Petersmeyer says that his goal is to increase the number of volunteers, hours worked, and money donated by 15 percent per year.

Everything depends, though, on presidential leadership. Since Bush is not going to devote a lot of money to fighting poverty—and it's clear that there's no political consensus for doing that anyway—he should devote time and political energy to it. That includes not just making speeches, but pushing family members (besides his wife, who is already active in literacy work) and administration appointees into high-visibility activity. Bush's goal ought to be that every church, corporation, law firm, school, and social club is involved in community work and that Americans genuinely feel that the definition of a successful life includes serving others. This wouldn't replace the need for government assistance, but it's a powerful energy source to supplement government in the short run and humanize it later on.

A new way to fight drugs and crime.

THE NO-BAIL SOLUTION

By Robert Nagel

In late January, after an argument over who would sit next to a girl at lunch, two youths sprayed semi-automatic machine-gun fire into a crowd of students leaving Wilson High School in Northwest Washington. The suspects were arrested, but they posted bail and were released within a week. Ten days later, in the hallway of Gar-Field High in the capital's Virginia suburbs, sophomore Damon Yorker was shot in the groin, apparently after he told some outsiders to stop staring at him. An 18-year old dropout, Shannon Monts, was arrested. He posted bail and was released in a day—before Yorker was out of the hospital.

The shootings were big news in Washington. The prompt release of the suspected shooters was not. Monts's release made page B5 of the *Washington Post*, and you had to read 13 paragraphs into a follow-up story on the Wilson High incident to learn that the suspects were back on the streets. "Gunman posts bail" stories lack a quality deemed essential to newsworthiness, namely novelty.

If it weren't such a frequent and typically American event, the prompt release of apparently dangerous criminals would seem bizarre. In some perfectly civilized countries (Sweden, for example) those charged with violent crimes are regularly held until trial. Yet here we are, engaged in a great war on drugs, terrified of urban violence we can't control and criminals we can't catch—and when we do manage to identify and capture a suspect, we calmly set him free again, almost as if we were throwing back a fish caught for sport.

The "drug war" provides an especially auspicious time to reassess the proper role of bail. If we know anything about the criminal drug culture, it's that those in it have what sociologists call short time-horizons. Crack addicts who will do anything for a "rock" are only the most obvious examples. Even dealers who aren't addicts are hardly engaged in long-range strategic planning. One week they're dropping out of high school, next week they're driving BMWs, next week they may be dead.

In a short-term criminal culture, the prospect of even a lengthy prison sentence starting, say, a year from now may not be very scary. A better deterrent would match the time-horizon of those it is meant to deter—it would be not a more severe, but a more *immediate* sanction. Reform of the bail laws to deny serious offenders routine pretrial release is an obvious way of accomplishing this. Kids thinking of making drug dealers their role models would see that, when the dealers were caught, they went to jail immediately and stayed there until trial instead of reappearing on the streets within hours. A no-bail approach certainly seems more promising than calling up a few more National Guardsmen. But it's not likely to happen until both liberals and conservatives reassess their ideas about pretrial detention.

The normal explanation for permissive American bail practices is, of course, the Constitution. There is, we are told, a "right" to bail and a "right" to be free pending trial. These "rights" have worked themselves into popular mythology in the form of the phrase "presumption of innocence"—an idea that, like the equally simplistic "right to bear arms," is usually invoked in order to shut down normal processes of thought and experimentation. In the *New York Times* editorial-page boilerplate, the "noble presumption" means that "the only purpose of holding a person until trial is to safeguard the trial process itself, preventing flight or the intimidation of witnesses." Even violent felons are entitled to walk out of jail after arrest if they can show they've always appeared punctually when tried for their previous crimes.

The legal foundation of this "right to bail" has always been shaky. For starters, the Constitution does not say all crimes must be bailable. Instead, the Eighth Amendment says only that "*excessive* bail shall not be required" (emphasis added). Some right-to-bail advocates have attempted to explain this inconvenient language as a "drafting error." But the same Congress that approved the Bill of Rights allowed denial of bail for capital offenses, which at the time included robbery, arson, and many other commonplace felonies.

In fact, there is a long American legal tradition permitting defendants to be detained before trial on strong proof that they committed serious crimes. Under the Judiciary Act of 1789, judges were told to take into account "the nature and circumstances of the offense,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and of the evidence . . ." As the University of Chicago's Albert Alschuler noted in a recent, exhaustive law review article, this was consistent with colonial law, which permitted denying bail "for capital offenses, where the proof is evident, or the presumption great." That, in turn, reflected centuries of British law, which (to use one example) permitted the denial of bail if "a man commit felony, and be taken in the manner [caught in the act]."

These traditional grounds for denying bail differ, in one significant aspect, from modern conservatives' ominous-sounding rationale of "preventive detention." Preventive-detention laws allow judges to deny bail if it can be shown a defendant is likely to be dangerous if released. The focus of preventive detention is prospective: the court must try to predict future harmful behavior. This predictive element is preventive detention's greatest defect. It gives the practice an Orwellian tinge—the court is jailing someone not because of what he's done but because of what he *might* do. It's also impractical: criminologists may be getting better at spotting future felons, but that will always be an imprecise business. Judges are seldom confident of their predictive powers, and they tend to apply preventive detention sparingly. The federal government has a new preventive detention law, but only 17 percent of federal drug defendants are denied bail under its "dangerousness" provisions; 68 percent are released.

The solution is to drop the requirement of showing future "dangerousness," and to emphasize only the traditional, retrospective factors: whether the "proof is evident" that the suspect *has committed* the serious felony with which he is charged. If there is sufficient proof that someone is guilty of a violent crime, it is odd indeed to describe him as non-dangerous. A judge may not be able to predict that a young man like Shannon Monts, who had a job and no prior criminal record, will injure anyone while out on bond. But if the proof is clear that he shot someone during a school yard argument, his dangerousness need not be predicted. It has been demonstrated.

At the very least, bail could be denied to suspects caught "in the manner"—i.e., red-handed. A "red-handed" rule, not insignificantly, would apply to many drug arrests, where the defendants are typically captured in the act of dealing.

Wouldn't the "presumption of innocence" be interpreted by the courts to prevent such a practice? Probably not. As the Supreme Court has said repeatedly, the presumption refers to the evidentiary rule that, during trial, places the burden of demonstrating a defendant's guilt on the government. The rule protects all of us from having to prove our innocence in the face of irresponsible prosecution. But it hardly requires that, before trial, society must shut its eyes to all available proof of wrongdoing.

A more serious obstacle to bail reform is likely to be the way judges interpret the broader Fifth Amendment principle of "due process." In this, as in many other areas, courts have had to come to terms with the fact that the Constitution's apparently attractive and clear protections do not exist in pure isolation, but rather in uneasy tension and sometimes outright contradiction with each other. The Constitution has always permitted pretrial detention, and it has also always guaranteed a right to a trial before punishment. There it is. The best that can be done is to try to accommodate these conflicting principles.

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has in recent years tried to do this by declaring that pretrial detention is not "punishment" if its purpose can be seen as "regulatory" (e.g., protecting society from future criminal acts) rather than "punitive." The virtue of this distinction is that it permits a symbolic affirmation of the two inconsistent constitutional principles. But it is not a useful distinction in the real world, where "punishment" and "regulation" are inevitably intertwined. The Court has approved preventive detention as merely "regulatory"—but the result must feel punitive enough to an untried defendant sitting behind bars. It's silly to pretend the reason he's locked up has nothing to do with society's moral condemnation of his acts.

If the courts insist, there is a perfectly good "regulatory" justification for a pretrial detention scheme that forswears prediction and focuses on what a defendant has done. The "regulation" would be designed to prevent the social injury that occurs if the criminal laws are made to seem frivolous—which is what happens when people are arrested for vicious crimes, on solid evidence, and then immediately released. Citizens legitimately expect their government to take what happens to them seriously. Should Damon Yorker see Shannon Monts in the school yard next week, he need not be shot again to suffer harm.

But, yes, a useful system of pretrial detention would also be broadly punitive. So? Instead of enforcing a questionable distinction between punishment and regulation, the courts might better interpret "due process" to require that the government's use of coercive power, for whichever reason, be supported by adequate evidence in each case. That means that no suspect should be denied bail without a post-arrest hearing at which a judge determines there is a clear, convincing case against him—and that, of course, the full force of the law's punishment should not be inflicted until after a prompt, complete, and fair trial at which his guilt must be shown "beyond a reasonable doubt."

This is not perfect "due process," and it is full of risks. Some innocent people will be jailed pending trial. But those risks would be minimized if a forthright emphasis on probable guilt replaced preventive detention's speculations about future conduct. Society makes judgments weighing this sort of risk against countervailing social needs (punitive and regulatory) all the time. Now, when those needs seem particularly intense—when crime appears to be unraveling the structure of many American communities—is a poor time to suspend our judgment for the sake of preserving constitutional myths about bail.

ROBERT NAGEL is Moses Lasky Professor of Law at the University of Colorado, and author of *Constitutional Cultures: The Mentality and Consequences of Judicial Review*, recently published by University of California Press.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fighting educational injustice for fun and profit.

CRAM SCAM

By Joshua Hammer

John Katzman likes to think of himself as a guerrilla fighter in the war against educational injustice. For too long, he says, American high school students have been held hostage to the Scholastic Aptitude Test, which he considers poorly formulated, confusing, and irrelevant—a gauge only of one's ability "to take the SAT." Worse still, the test is biased against blacks and other minorities; it is written by upper-middle-class whites for upper-middle-class whites, he says. So Katzman wants to tear the whole system down. His goal is to usher in a new age of education, one in which college applicants will be judged on their true merits. "There's nothing on the SAT that has to do with intelligence," he says. "I think we can come up with something better."

Guerrilla warfare is a tough business, but it has its upside. While working to destroy the SAT, Katzman has managed to make himself a millionaire many times over. Nine years ago, just out of Princeton, he founded the Princeton Review, an iconoclastic SAT-preparation course that purports to show how easy it is to do well on the test without mastering the material—mainly by using a handful of clever tricks. The idea, he says, is to expose the unfairness and silliness of the SAT. Meanwhile, his company is growing fast. In 1988 the Review and its franchises grossed about $12 million from the six-week courses and the best-selling how-to book *Cracking The System*. In fact, the company has expanded so fast that Katzman barely has time to think about what he'll do once he's driven the SAT into extinction. He's busy meeting with accountants, selling five to ten Princeton Review franchises a year, and taking calls from investment bankers who relish the thought of taking the Review public. This would make Katzman even richer than he is, but, nonetheless, he resolutely tells them no. He's waiting, he explains, for the return of the bull market.

In high school corridors and in the popular media, Katzman has become something of a folk hero. He's been profiled in *Forbes*, *Rolling Stone*, *Time*, and other magazines, heralded as a brash, renegade entrepreneur—and one with a social conscience, no less. He is commonly pictured in jeans, running shoes, and a Princeton Review T-shirt—which is also commonly sported by grateful high school seniors.

The problem with all this isn't the money Katzman's making. Capitalism is a fine thing, especially when harnessed to a noble purpose. The problem is that Katzman's professed purpose isn't being advanced by his capitalism. On the contrary: until the SAT actually collapses—which definitely won't happen soon, and probably won't happen ever, at least not in the way Katzman imagines—the Princeton Review only heightens the injustices that he says infuriate him. Thousands of Review customers—almost all of them white and affluent—are paying $645 apiece to inflate their SAT scores in ways that, Katzman admits, have little to do with education. Meanwhile, as the Review sends these well-to-do whites into colleges they may not deserve to attend, the have-nots—including the inner-city blacks and Hispanics Katzman swears he's serving—fall further behind. The more spaces that are occupied by dumb, rich, white kids, the fewer there are for smart, poor, minority kids—and smart kids of all kinds, for that matter.

It used to be that high school kids looked at SAT-preparation courses as a stigma—an emotional crutch reserved for the class pariahs. But last year more than 60,000 high school students took some form of commercial cram course, double the number from five years ago. This trend is an embarrassment and a growing concern to the College Board, which sponsors the SAT, and the Educational Testing Service, which writes it. Both long insisted that the SAT was essentially coach-proof because it measures something called "developed ability"—not innate intelligence, and not memorized learning, but something in between, something that solidifies "over a student's entire academic life," as the Board put it in 1977.

That claim has been undermined by the Princeton Review, as well as by more conventional coaching outfits like the Stanley H. Kaplan Educational Center. Katzman cites studies that show the Review boosting combined test scores by an average of 110-160 points (on a scale of 400-1600). The College Board and ETS dispute Katzman's numbers, but they now grant that vocabulary and reading practice and other coaching techniques can have some effect. Still, their studies suggest a gain from test-prep courses of only 30 to 50 points. Admitting that coaching significantly boosts scores would pose a serious public relations problem for ETS. Since coaching is available mainly to the affluent, this would be an admission that the test has inequitable effects. And conceding the success of Katzman's peculiarly anti-educational brand of coaching would be worse still, implying that the test is not just unfair but frivolous.

JOSHUA HAMMER is a general editor at *Newsweek*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Princeton Review began as a one-man operation; Katzman tutored about 15 kids in his parents' apartment. In the early years, he thought of the Review primarily as a challenge to Stanley Kaplan, the dominant cram-course force. He saw that Kaplan was saddled with a stodgy, stale image. "Do you know anybody who took Stanley Kaplan in high school?" asks Katzman, an unpretentious and likable 29-year-old. "The kids in school who took Kaplan were the lower end. They were never proud of it—they never wore a Kaplan T-shirt."

Kaplan, a 69-year-old former high school teacher, was an easy target—an eat-your-spinach kind of guy in a shoot-your-steroids era. He professes to be a firm believer in the SAT, and embraces the College Board's assessment that there's nothing like long, hard studying to improve your scores. Sure, "you should also know some basic rules of test-taking strategy," but he stresses "mastering—not beating—the test."

Kaplan's method consists of 60 to 70 hours of lessons and drills in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and math. Students also do outside exercises. To improve aptitude in the analogy and sentence-completion sections, Kaplan gives his tutees tons of vocabulary words and urges them to use them in real-life situations. He says he tells his students, "Tell your mom you're *impecunious*. You have a *paltry* allowance and you want an *augmentation*." He explains, "We want them to get excited about words. We say we don't necessarily expect these words to be on the test, but certainly they'll be helpful in the future."

"Helpful in the future" isn't a phrase that resonates for long in the brain of the average 1980s high school student—a fact that Katzman swiftly exploited. In 1982 he teamed up with Adam Robinson, a New York City SAT tutor who became the Review's theoretician. "Adam was responsible for most of the 'subversive' stuff," says Katzman. The resulting Review incorporated some math and English fundamentals, but only the bare minimum; whereas Kaplan says he teaches 3,000 vocabulary words, Katzman taught only "the Hit Parade"—the 100 words that the Review had deemed most likely to appear on the SAT. Katzman says he based "more than 50 percent" of his teaching on having students "get inside the heads of the test makers" and figure out how to get the right answers, or at least improve their odds, without actually learning much of substance.

"Everybody [else] who teaches the SAT teaches *that much* material," says Katzman, extending his hands outward as if trying to grasp a beach ball. "The SAT tests *this much*." His hands contract to within inches of each other. "There is this much stuff that you don't know that you'll have to know to get a 700."

Katzman teaches his students patterns—for example, that the questions in each section start easy and get progressively harder. (This is now pointed out by everybody, including Stanley Kaplan and the College Board.) Students shooting for a 550 might want to skip the hard questions and focus on the easy ones. Students also learn that many answers in the medium-hard and difficult questions are "distractors." These are appealing but wrong answers intended to trip up the average, not brilliant test-taker, whom Katzman and Robinson called "Joe Bloggs." By eliminating Joe Bloggs answers, one can guess with some confidence. Katzman teaches students how to scan reading comprehension passages efficiently, and he tells them that some questions can be answered without even glancing at the passages. His course manual says there's always an "ethnic" passage, which is "invariably positive or inspirational in tone, and is generally written by a person of that ethnic group." So all answers with negative vibes can be ruled out.

As for math: "Once you've learned the technique of plugging in numbers and fiddling around, I could in an afternoon get you so good at it that you'd never have to do algebra again on the SATs. . . . I'm moving you away from higher level reasoning into more basic stuff." In the past, Katzman advised students to rip off the bottom corner of the answer sheet and use it as a crude protractor—an effective short-circuiting of the abstract geometric reasoning that ETS is trying to test. Now that the College Board has outlawed tearing the test materials, Katzman teaches his kids how to fold the paper into a protractor without tearing it.

Notwithstanding Katzman's present political pronouncements, the Review was strictly business in its early years. Katzman recalls, "I had absolutely no political preconceptions about the SAT." But in the mid-1980s, he entered into an alliance with writer David Owen that paid large public relations dividends. Owen had come to his attention in 1983, when he wrote a lengthy diatribe against the SAT in *Harper's* called "The Last Days of ETS," later expanded into a book called *None of the Above*. In the book, Owen charged that the multiple-choice questions on the SAT are badly conceived and written and that the test measures virtually nothing meaningful. He also trotted out the oft-repeated argument that the SAT was riddled with examples of "racial and cultural bias." The Owen article "caught my eye. He had stronger views than I did, although we both had a good time making fun of ETS," says Katzman. In 1985, when Owen glowingly profiled the Review in *Rolling Stone*, "he made me look more political than I was. But the response by ETS was so strong that I sort of became that political."

Does the Princeton Review teach kids to cheat? Katzman doesn't defend cheating in the strict sense of the word. Nothing he teaches would get a kid drummed out of the cafeteria by the SAT proctor. On the other hand, the subliminal message running through the Review is: ETS is cheating us, so it's all right to cheat them. For example, one of Katzman's proudest feats was to teach students to spot the "experimental" section of the SAT so they wouldn't have to waste their energy on it. He didn't instruct kids to use the time thus gained to go back and work on previous sections, in violation of the rules. But no one doubts that some Review graduates did exactly that. One Princeton Review teacher admitted to me, "I tell my kids . . . if the proctor isn't looking and they've finished one section, they should go back to a section they weren't able to finish and work on it. . . . I say, 'If he's watching you like a hawk, don't do it.' "

Though not technically illegal, many of the shortcuts Katzman teaches are equal in effect to common cheating. In high school, stealing answer sheets or copying

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from someone else is seen as pernicious because it lets students do well without learning the material, and thus makes test scores less reflective of what they're supposed to reflect. The Princeton Review has the same effect. Indeed, the whole *point* of the Review is to increase the disparity between one's actual qualifications for college and one's SAT scores. It's a bit odd for Katzman to divide his time between complaining that the SAT is not a good predictor of college performance and making it a worse predictor.

Meanwhile, who are the kids whose SAT scores are being artificially inflated? Wealthy white kids, many from elite prep schools. Katzman is aware of the charge that the Review is by affluent whites for affluent whites. In response, he says he gives some fraction of his profits to a foundation that aids minority kids. And on top of that, he doles out a few Princeton Review scholarships to lower-income kids each year. Great. Just what inner-city black teenagers need: someone to reinforce the tempting and destructive idea that an unjust system is out to get them, and that the object of the game is to outsmart it rather than to work hard within it.

Complaints about Katzman's influence on college admissions aren't merely rhetorical. It's gotten to the point where the Review affects enough high school students to constitute a significant source of injustice. Of the 1.7 million kids who took the SAT last year, roughly 100,000 applied to the eight dozen most selective schools in the United States. Nearly 20,000 kids went through the Princeton Review course, most of them probably aiming at those same schools. And that figure is likely to rise. The Review has 40 franchises (they pay Katzman between $100,000 and $200,000 up front, buy course materials from him, and hand over eight percent of revenues), and in 1988 *Inc.* magazine ranked it the 106th fastest growing company in America. Also, Katzman has steered Stanley Kaplan toward a more cynical approach. Kaplan now teaches the Joe Bloggs strategy and tells students about the positive tone of ethnic reading passages. (Although Kaplan has from the beginning probably emphasized test-taking "skills" more, and meat-and-potatoes "learning" a bit less, than he likes to let on.)

Katzman defends the apparent conflict between his words and his deeds in sweeping terms. "We live in a capitalist country. So rich kids have nicer cars, nicer clothes, nicer houses, and nicer SAT scores," he says. "The problem isn't that they have nicer SAT scores. The problem is that you're looking at the SAT as an objective measure, admitting people to college and giving them scholarships [based on the SAT]. It's like admitting them to college on the basis of how nice their car is." It may seem unfair, he concedes, that wealthy white kids are boosting their college chances by learning a few tricks, but in the long run, it'll benefit us all by exposing ETS for what it is.

There's no denying Katzman has put the College Board and ETS on the defensive. He has destroyed the contention that the SAT can't be coached. He has prompted ETS to consider replacing some multiple choice answers with fill-in answers. And recently, the College Board has acknowledged that the "ethnic" reading passages are flawed. No doubt other changes are on the way. But the fact that ETS has made corrections casts some doubt on Katzman's rationale for destroying the exam. This isn't some inflexible monolith out to crush students, but a flexible format that can be improved, and with each improvement it becomes a more reliable gauge. Indeed, by helping ETS correct the test's flaws, Katzman is making it steadily less likely that the system will ever come tumbling down.

This was unlikely to begin with. Contrary to Owen's apocalyptic 1983 *Harper's* article, the system was never on the verge of breakdown. Although a handful of selective colleges have made the SAT optional since 1983, more than 200 colleges have started requiring it. Most educators continue to see the SAT as a fairly sophisticated barometer of a person's intellectual faculties upon leaving high school, and therefore as a useful tool for evaluation, so long as it isn't overemphasized. "Our studies have shown that combined with performance in the [high school] classroom, we can rely on the SAT to predict freshman-year performance more accurately than detractors of SAT would like to believe," says Dean of Admissions Willis J. Stetson of the University of Pennsylvania. "The problem with the SAT is the perception of its use, not with the use that colleges are making of it." Among the people who have worked hard to warp those perceptions are Katzman and Owen.

The great hidden truth about the SAT is that it's served since its inception in the 1950s as a pluralizing force in Ivy League and other selective colleges. It provides a national yardstick that admissions officers can rely on when they venture beyond the well-known East Coast prep schools and are confronted with a transcript from an unfamiliar high school in the hinterland. For someone like Katzman, who prepped at Birch Wathen on Manhattan's Upper East Side, the SAT may seem dispensable. But for more than a few bright working-class public school students, the SAT has meant a ticket to Harvard. Which, thankfully, has meant a ticket to State U. for some vacuous blue-blood who otherwise might have wound up with a Cabinet position in a Republican administration.

Such defenses of the SAT, of course, don't sit well with blacks and Hispanics—who as a group score lower than whites. They would rather attack the messenger than the message: that the state of inner-city education, and of other aspects of the inner-city environment, is pathetic. But the message is accurate, and tirelessly combing old SAT tests for the occasional use of words like "regatta" and "sonata" won't change that.

As charges of cultural bias have become less tenable, SAT critics have fallen back on the coaching argument. To whit: the fact that the SAT can be coached shows that it doesn't mirror the fruits of ten years of education. But *any* test of cumulative knowledge—from a high school achievement test to a bar exam—is coachable, if for no other reason than that exposure to sample questions and to a test atmosphere makes students feel more comfortable. And, of course, there are other reasons, too, ranging from mastering test-taking "skills" to brushing up on vaguely remembered lessons.

The problem isn't so much that coaching can help as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that it's mainly available to the very kids who have gotten the better half of our inequitable educational system in the first place—those who go to prep schools and tony suburban high schools. In an ideal world, in which high-priced coaching courses were available to everyone, entrepreneurs-cum-educators like Stanley Kaplan might make a positive difference. An enforced diet of reading, vocabulary drill, and algebra might help students prepare for college, crystallizing lessons from high school and spurring discipline and further study. But even in such a world, the Princeton Review wouldn't do much good. "Getting inside the minds" of the people who write the SAT, and answering reading comprehension questions without doing the reading, may be clever. But the only thing it's good preparation for is a career as a tutor at the Princeton Review.

Is there a Yugo in Gorbo's future?

GLASNOSTRADAMUS

By Slavenka Drakulić

"This isn't supposed to happen," an American friend said to me in amazement after the recent resignation of the Yugoslav government. "Governments resign in parliamentary democracies. In Communist countries governments just sit there. Or get purged."

He was right, but only to a degree. Yugoslavia is not now, nor has it ever been, a "normal" Communist country. Of course, there is no such thing any longer, not in the age of Gorbachev. But Yugoslavia's singularity dates all the way back to 1948 and Tito's split with Stalin. Decades of innovation followed: Yugoslavia's brand of "workers' self-management," which has worked better in theory than in practice; a non-aligned foreign policy; the first open criticism of orthodox Marxism (by the "Praxis" philosophers in the 1960s); the decentralization of the state; the introduction of a market economy; legalization of the right to strike; and, in recent years, routine public questioning of the Communist Party's monopoly of state power. The resignation of Prime Minister Branko Mikulić and his Cabinet is only the latest example of Yugoslav exceptionalism. The case of Yugoslavia has seemed proof that "socialism" can get along without the more overt forms of repression.

Yugoslavia has long explored political territory that the Soviet Union—with which it shares not only the one-party system but also a multinational, multireligious, and multilingual mix of peoples—is only now entering. Much of what is happening in Moscow is old news in Belgrade. Yugoslavia's present—dominated, for the moment, by ethnic conflict—may offer clues to the Soviet Union's future.

In both countries, the process of democratization, curiously, started from the top. The most obvious example is the relative freedom of the press, which in the Soviet case was introduced by a political decision virtually overnight. In Yugoslavia, where the change was more gradual, liberalization seemed less artificial. It came in the late 1960s, when the country was opening up to the West and the League of Communists was no longer able to maintain its monolithic facade; indeed, freedom rose in precise tandem with intraparty dissension.

All the same, Yugoslavia's *glasnost* occurred only under the condition that it stop short of threatening the Communist Party's legitimacy and monopoly of power. Journalists, writers, scientists, academics, and the intelligentsia in general have long been able to criticize and analyze in much the same way Soviets are doing today, but they always had to be "on the line," as defined by the Party. As in the Soviet Union, newspapers, magazines, publishing houses, and radio and TV stations are state-licensed (although in Yugoslavia there are small private publishers as well). Not only that: all editors in chief—even of publications equivalent to *House & Garden* and *Mademoiselle*—have to be approved by the Party. They can therefore be easily replaced. Living in such a country one soon learns that freedom of the press is strictly conditional, and that the most one can hope for is to compromise as little as possible.

But the bottom line, as we are learning to say, is that it is better to have some freedom than none. *Glasnost*, even *glasnost* "from above," makes it possible not only to criticize but also to inform—to bring long-hidden realities up to the surface. Soviet citizens, like lovers in the first months of an affair, are still smitten with their newly bestowed freedom—getting up early, waiting in line for the newspapers to arrive at the newsstand, and reading articles so daring they can hardly believe their eyes.

In Yugoslavia that sort of euphoria has long since faded. But while it lasted it helped prevent the emergence of independent social and political movements. People lived under the illusion that speaking and writing about the necessity for changes in society would suffice eventually to bring them about. Freedom of the

SLAVENKA DRAKULIĆ is a novelist and commentator for the Zagreb-based weekly *Danas*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

press opened the way for an eruption of criticism of the system—while simultaneously increasing people's trust in that same system. Disillusionment has come only recently, beginning in the early 1980s with ecological, feminist, and pacifist movements, and growing enormously in the last year as economic crisis has engulfed the country. Yugoslavia now has both the highest unemployment rate (more than 14 percent) and the highest inflation rate (270 percent) in Europe. One result is an openly expressed demand for a multiparty system.

The situation in the publishing and film industries has developed along similar lines. The Soviet Union is experiencing a flood of long-banned books and movies. But once Brodsky, Pasternak, Nadezhda Mandelstam, Arthur Koestler, and ultimately Solzhenitsyn have been published, what then? It may seem too soon to ask such a question, but if there is a parallel between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, the time to ask it is now. In Yugoslavia all the "problematic" authors were published long ago—not just Nabokov and Pasternak (they were not even considered a big deal) but Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and *The Gulag Archipelago*, Mandelstam's memoirs, and a great deal besides: innumerable memoirs of Stalin's victims, devastating historical studies of Stalinism, unorthodox sociological and political analyses, and even Vladimir Dedijer's *A New Addendum to Tito's Biography*, a startling break in the usual uncritical treatment of Yugoslavia's Lenin. Furthermore, during the 1970s there appeared a flood of novels and memoirs about Goli Otok (Naked Island), Yugoslavia's equivalent of the Gulag, where thousands of Stalinists and alleged Stalinists were held under appalling conditions. In other words, the phenomenon of literature as a corrective to an official history is very well known in Yugoslavia. So is investigative journalism, from which no one is immune. When Mikulić was still prime minister, the sensationalist paper *Duga* (Rainbow) revealed that he had used his office to get a bank loan to build a house for his son. The main remaining workaday taboo is Tito, his private life and his role in history—and even that is eroding. The cover of a recent issue of *Mladina*, the Slovenian youth magazine, shows Tito's picture partly obscured by a Nazi flag—a juxtaposition that is iconoclastic almost beyond belief.

Even so, still lurking behind all the smashed taboos is Article 133 of the Yugoslav penal code, which is so broad (and so vaguely worded) that just about anybody can be charged and jailed for "hostile propaganda." It is in fact being used right now to detain Albanian separatists in Kosovo, the "autonomous province" of Serbia, after a week of rioting that has left more than 30 people dead. Article 133 is the target of a vigorous abolition campaign in Slovenia, the most liberal of Yugoslavia's constituent republics, where opponents wear STOP 133 buttons.

In this atmosphere, journalists are supposed to be happy because they can write things that would have cost their older colleagues their jobs, or worse. Still, one is painfully aware of the invisible limits on one's independence. In a situation where there is no overt censorship but no overt democracy either, journalists learn to develop a kind of political superego that goes by the name of autocensorship. This means that without direct Party control you must internalize the rules of the game and judge for yourself how far you can go in challenging "the line."

But the more important borders surrounding freedom of the press—and other civic freedoms as well—are national. That is, freedom exists only in the interstices of compromises within and among the separate Communist Parties of the six republics that constitute the Yugoslav federation. The rivalry among the republican parties has opened political space for citizens. At the same time, however, the power these parties wield within their republics has created an apparatus for local manipulation and repression. For example, when the Serbian party leader Slobodan Milošević came to power in late 1987, he instantly replaced the directors of all the TV and radio stations and the editors of every newspaper and magazine in the republic of Serbia, including the editor of the country's leading "quality" daily, *Politika*. In the old Bolshevik way, Milošević simply accused them of not being "on the line" and replaced them with his own people. It was all done quite legally, using the established self-management procedures. Milošević, with the help of the media, was then able to proceed to manipulate the Serbian masses and overturn the leadership not only in predominantly Albanian Kosovo, but also in the neighboring republic of Montenegro and in Serbia's other autonomous province, the largely Hungarian Vojvodina. The result is that much of the country is now on the verge of civil war and martial law.

In Communist countries, even Yugoslavia, politicians can still get rid of journalists but journalists can't quite get rid of politicians. After Prime Minister Mikulić's resignation, a well-known Yugoslav columnist was lionized as "person of the week" in the weekly newsmagazine *Danas* (Today) because he had been attacking the prime minister and his reforms for more than three years. But Mikulić and his government resigned because the economy was bankrupt, not because of criticism in the press. The hopeful lesson here is that while *perestroika* and *glasnost* rise together, they need not fall together. Economic reforms can fail (as they have again and again in Yugoslavia) but *glasnost* can flourish.

The growth of separate party feifdoms in Yugoslavia seems to have created a new model of political struggle. The republican parties have started to function as different parties—or, at least, as different wings within the same party—with ideas of power and interests divided along republican lines. The result is a mutated version of a multiparty system, with the different parties fighting for power and influence within the federation. The Serbian party is the most conservative and dogmatic—and the most powerful. The Slovenian party is the most democratic and liberal, allowing the widest freedom of the press ever experienced in Yugoslavia. With four other republics in between, in addition to the weak federal government and a decentralized economy, the country is in unending crisis, and the recent resignation of the government is only one sign of it.

An ugly corollary is that ethnic nationalist movements are inspired and led by the republican parties in order to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

obtain power and to shift attention from social and economic to ethnic issues. In this way, too, Yugoslavia may be a precursor of the Soviet Union. Ethnic nationalism in the Soviet Union is more or less under control at the moment, but it is bound to become not only more visible but more demanding, changing its character from cultural to political nationalism. In the Communist system, ethnicity, aside from class, is the only fully sanctioned way for an individual to express his sense of identity; thus, ethnicity becomes a way to sublimate demands for broad political changes and for more freedom—all kinds of freedom. In the Soviet Union, it will be interesting to see if the local and republican party bureaucracies, in their struggle for power, learn to manipulate nationalist uprisings as they have in Yugoslavia, thus threatening the stability of the country itself.

Yet there is another side to this as well. On the same day Mikulić's resignation was accepted, a new foreign investment law was passed, under which, for the first time, foreign investors have the same rights as their domestic partners. There are also more and more discussions about the possibility of joining the European Common Market—an idea that only a year ago was considered heretical. Today the big worry is that the EC will not accept Yugoslavia. In addition to that, Janez Stanovnik, the president of the Slovenian republic, recently said that in his opinion the emergence of other political parties is inevitable. Less than a month later, four new political organizations were formed: the Slovenen Democratic Alliance, the Croatian Democratic Alliance, the Alliance for a Yugoslav Democratic Initiative, and the Union of Social Democrats of Slovenia. These groups cannot yet exert formal influence—for example, through parliament—but they clearly are the seeds of a multiparty system. According to the *Mladina* magazine poll, if a free election were held in Slovenia today, a hypothetical social democratic party would get 35 percent, a social Christian party 23 percent, and the Communists a whopping eight percent. The same poll showed that only 40 percent of the Communist Party's own members would vote for it.

As in any crisis, there are a number of radically different imaginable outcomes. But it seems that what critics call "directed democratization" (i.e., democratization controlled by the Communist Party) is slowly falling apart. The only obvious way the process can be stopped is through a military coup—a perfectly imaginable possibility, alas. There is as yet no sign that the ruling party (or rather parties) will give up power willingly. The fact remains that the borders of democratization in a one-party system are patrolled by armed guards. The dead in Kosovo prove it.

We pause for a word from our skeptic.

TIME OUT

By James Bennet

Time Inc. may be one of the most powerful publishers in the country, and Warner Communications Inc. may be an entertainment empire, and, combined, they may form the heftiest media and entertainment company on the planet, but all that won't mean that their merger proposal will get special treatment from our vigilant Washington antitrust watchdogs. Which is to say, the plan should sail right through. During the last few years of merger mania, the antitrust division of the Department of Justice and its counterpart at the Federal Trade Commission have behaved more like slightly boozy bridesmaids than wary prospective in-laws. This time around, our congressional representatives are piling merrily into the church, too.

At a recent oversight hearing on the merger, Time Chairman Richard Munro and Warner Chairman Steven Ross spoke before what could charitably be called a charitable audience. Jack Brooks of Texas, presiding, aired a few concerns, and a couple of other representatives raised a doubt or two, but for the most part the hearing melted into a congressional-corporate love-in. The most remarkable performance was turned in by Pat Schroeder of Colorado, who managed to "salute" Munro three times and his mother once for raising him so well. Just about everyone seemed to buy the companies' argument for the merger.

That argument, as presented by Ross and Munro, is twofold: this "strategic maneuver" will help Time Warner Inc. "strengthen our country's international competitiveness" and better serve the public interest through "the creation of diverse and innovative programming." The competitiveness argument carries a lot of weight on the Hill these days. And that's not surprising. Foreign companies such as Bertelsmann A.G. of West Germany (the world's largest communications company until Time and Warner merge) and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. have been buying up American news, publishing, and entertainment properties—which have been buying each other—and Time and Warner have both been rumored as takeover targets in the past. Media analysts, as well as the chairmen of Time and Warner, have predicted that a half-dozen massive con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For "good reporting you won't find anywhere else" give *The Washington Monthly* a try.

—The Key West Citizen

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE SPEAKER
The Washington Monthly
DAMN YOU, CONNIE YOU'VE RUINED OUR FOREIGN POLICY!
The Washington Monthly
SNOBS AND SLOBS:
Nicholas Lemann on William Buckley
James Fallows on Patrick Buchanan

"Does its specialty—government and politics—better than any other magazine around"
—The Washington Post

"Pencils in the agenda for editors and staffers at *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*, *Time* as well as *Newsweek*"
—The Boston Globe

20TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL—MORE THAN ⅓ OFF

FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY ☆ ☆

☆ **Special Bonus** ☆

Respond now and receive, at no extra charge, the 20th anniversary issue featuring articles by Taylor Branch, Russell Baker, James Fallows, Michael Kinsley, and many others. While supplies last.

☐ Yes! Enter my subscription for a full year (11 issues) for only $18.95.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me later
☐ Charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Credit card no. _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____

For Canadian subscriptions add $3 postage; all other foreign add $5.

Send to: The Washington Monthly
1611 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20009

794302

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

glomerates will control the global communications market in the 1990s.

The merger ostensibly ensures in two ways that Time Warner will be one of them. One is sheer size; a company with annual revenues exceeding $10 billion isn't likely to be swallowed by other media giants. The other is the efficiency that can grow out of conglomeration, especially when so many of the companies being joined deal in communications. Since the merger was announced, there's been some speculation in the business pages that Time and Warner overrate their "synergies," that in fact the merger will confer few economies of scale and other efficiencies. For consumers, though, there is a more important question: Are the synergies that do exist really cause for rejoicing? In general, the answer is no. In fact, the efficiencies that Time Warner hopes to realize fall into an odd pattern. They range from negligible and overstated to potentially huge; and the larger they loom in financial terms, the less likely they are to serve the public interest.

Concerns about the merger's effect on the public interest can be divided into two categories. First, there are the fears that stem from the general concentration of power in the communications business. They have a fuzzy and paranoid sound, and they have been out of vogue (except among old-fashioned lefties) ever since books claiming that liquor companies sneak the word "sex" into their advertisements' ice cubes stopped selling well. This isn't to say that these fears aren't worth trotting out for examination—just that they're hard to pin down. The other fears are a bit more concrete, and are more likely to grab people's attention, because they deal with issues that weigh heavily on enlightened Americans: how much they have to pay for Cable TV, and what kind of programming they get. These two kinds of concerns recognize something generally ignored these days, namely that information is a commodity fundamentally different from shoes and green peas, and that developments affecting the way it gets handled deserve a particular kind of scrutiny.

The fuzzy, paranoid kind of fears were accidentally stoked at the congressional hearings by a media analyst for Goldman, Sachs and Co., who highlighted some of the efficiencies gained by fusing Time and Warner. He pointed out that Time magazines and books could be sold through Warner's international distributing system. (Likely.) He pointed out that each company could benefit from the other's creative staffs. (Unlikely.) And he pointed out that the new efficiencies "could include cross-promotion of Warner's new movie or record releases in Time Inc. magazines." Hmmm. Of course, these were the words of a businessman, someone not steeped in the journalistic ethos—or, for that matter, the p.r. ethos. Here's Munro on the same subject (which popped up at the hearing only rarely): "We pledge that the new company will remain committed to the practice of independent journalism."

This pledge will be going head-to-head with some pretty compelling economic logic. Time owns 12 magazines, and has at least a 50 percent share in 29 more—all told, a lot of influence to exert on behalf of, say, a blockbuster movie. Magazine publishing was once the soul of the company, and it still accounts for 40 percent of Time Inc.'s business, but that number will shrink to about 18 percent after the merger. Right now, it appears that only one person will represent the magazine end of the company on the merged board of 24 directors. Meanwhile, the probability that a given story will have a direct impact on corporate interests will rise. That *Time* allowed itself to be scooped by *Newsweek* on its own merger, and that in its story a week later it forfeited its editorial voice to quote other publications on the deal's implications, suggest that the magazine doesn't entirely trust its ability to treat intraconglomerate news objectively. And even if the company lays down a very scrupulous policy in this area, journalists are not deaf to the in-house echoes of their work. When the American Society of Newspaper Editors surveyed editors of newspaper chains nine years ago, they found that 27 percent did not feel free to run stories that might damage the parent company.

In theory, discriminating readers will keep *Time*'s movie and music reviews, and any business coverage affecting any part of Time Warner, honest in the face of temptation; if *Time* starts playing favorites, then readers will switch to less entangled journals. The problem is, though, that everybody's pretty tangled up these days. Most media are owned by mega-companies that—whether or not they are primarily in the communications business—have strong economic incentives to influence the news. (They share some common interests, too, like limiting government interference in mergers and acquisitions.) And a growing number of those mega-companies include, like Time Warner, lots of different communications businesses. In his book *The Media Monopoly*, Ben Bagdikian reported that, in 1982, 50 American corporations controlled most of the American media, in which he included newspapers, magazines, radio, books, television, and movies; by 1987 he had revised that number to 26. If you continue that trend through the next decade, power becomes pretty concentrated.

Lest this line of thought drift off into conspiracy theory, here's the obligatory disclaimer: fears of corporate concentration in the communications business, and of attendant conflicts of interest, are fairly exaggerated and may stay that way. Perhaps corporate America truly respects editorial independence and will swallow the inefficiencies that negative coverage can sometimes inflict. On the other hand, we know that diversity works; and we know that concentration certainly won't encourage it, and will supply few countervailing societal benefits. The point is simply that, when weighing the costs and benefits of communications mergers, public officials might want to add in a few intangible points on the cost side, just for good measure. Wouldn't you expect someone—say, a self-described liberal Democrat like Schroeder—to clear her throat and raise this issue?

In the realm of cable television, where Time and Warner promise great gains for diversity, the merger's implications for the public interest are somewhat easier to discern. It is here that the Time-Warner marriage offers the greatest synergy; and it is here, not coinciden-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tally, that the consumer is most likely to lose out. Indeed, this is the one area of the deal that managed to get a few congressmen exercised.

Cable franchises are peculiar businesses that have slipped through the cracks separating our regulatory and antitrust agencies. Almost all communities with cable are supplied by only one franchise, for the same reason communities are supplied by only one electrical company: having two sets of cables running side by side through a town would be hugely inefficient. But whereas electrical utilities are regulated to prevent them from abusing their monopolies, cable franchises aren't; the Cable Act of 1984 took away local governments' power to regulate them. Meanwhile, the FCC doesn't regulate cable either; it has deemed it a competitive industry, which requires only antitrust oversight. But the Justice Department, source of that oversight, looks upon each cable franchise as a natural monopoly subject to regulation, which must come from the FCC—which won't do it—or the municipality—which can't. Guess who's benefitted from these interagency word games? And guess who hasn't? In the 12 months ending in October 1988, cable prices rose 13.6 percent, compared with 4.2 percent for the Consumer Price Index. And you can decide for yourself how diverse and innovative the programming is.

Time Warner Inc. would be well positioned to cash in on the idiosyncrasies of this increasingly lucrative industry. Time is the second-largest owner of cable systems. Once combined with Warner, which is in fifth place, it will control the wires carrying television into 12 percent of the 54 percent of American homes that rely on cable. The leader, Tele-Communications Inc., or TCI, has 24 percent. But Time Warner will have something TCI doesn't have—a hefty vertical integration, since Time owns both Home Box Office and Cinemax, and Warner owns and makes movies and TV shows. Merged, the company will have unique leverage. As one of the largest distributors of cable TV, it will have influence over the survival of programmers; and as one of the largest programmers, it will have great leverage over distributors.

At the hearing, representatives of the wireless cable TV industry testified that Time Inc. already denies competing distributors access to HBO, and others in the industry make the same complaint. Wireless cable, which sends its signals through the air to special antennae, often can operate less expensively than coaxial cable systems. (Someday it could be competitive enough to make regulation of municipal cable franchises less important.) But without HBO, which has exclusive contracts with several studios, any wireless system becomes much less attractive to buyers, making it easier for Time Inc.'s cable distributors to raise prices without much fear of competition. Meanwhile, as a large distributor, Time Warner could demand lower rates for carrying a programmer's shows, which drives the price of the programs up for small competing distributors that can't promise as many viewers.

In addition to pressuring other distributors, Time Warner could use its sheer bulk to smother small would-be programmers. Before producers can make the substantial investment a new show demands, they need some assurance that it will reach Americans' television screens; for that, they need the blessing of the large distributors. When they were speaking about the diverse programming this merger would yield, Munro and Ross were referring only to Time-Warner productions. The benefits for overall diversity are murky, to say the least. Time Warner may be in good shape to penetrate the European cable market—but at what cost, in diversity and price, at home?

Last June, well before the merger, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, a division of the Department of Commerce, produced a study of the cable industry that pointed to excessive concentration and advised that the FCC review federal policy. The FCC hasn't responded. But some action—to force the divestiture of Time or Warner cable holdings, to re-regulate the industry, or to permit the telephone companies, with their access to superior, fiber-optic technology, to compete as cable distributors—seems in order. And it may be forthcoming. The merger will be reviewed this month by a Senate antitrust subcommittee whose chairman, Howard Metzenbaum, has sent two letters to the Department of Justice pointing out abuses in the industry. Any action will have to come from Congress; the antitrust division of the Justice Department, given its recent record, will probably approve the merger without a fuss. The same goes for the FCC.

Maybe the senators, unlike their colleagues in the House, will take advantage of their forum to mull the antagonism between Time and Warner's claims of new competitiveness and their claims of new programming diversity and public service in general. While vertical integration may supply justifiable efficiencies in the shoe industry, in the idea business preserving diversity ought to carry more weight. Even if it could be shown that the prices consumers pay won't go up as a result of the merger—enough to grant a green light by traditional antitrust standards—a few additional questions would be in order.

Legally, this qualitative difference between information and other products has already been recognized. The Supreme Court ruled in 1945 that the First Amendment presupposes "that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public . . ." That ruling formed the basis of a 1978 decision validating FCC interference to prevent owners of daily newspapers from buying TV and radio stations in the same cities in which they publish.

As opponents of regulation point out, the rationale for such interference has eroded as cable TV and wireless cable TV have pluralized video options. This is a fair point, but it is also fair to note that this very pluralism can be undercut by the concentration of communications power in the hands of a few big companies.

Ross and Munro, actually, seem to agree that information is a unique commodity. They pointed out in their testimony, "There is more at stake here than dollars and market position. In the case of media, entertainment, educational, and cultural businesses, there is a special consideration." Or, at least, there should be. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Fact-facing

The Vanishing American (1925) was my first experience of the American Indian as anything but a figure of villainy or fun. Richard Dix, a hero of mine at the time, played a Navajo who fell in love with a white woman and died in her arms—after which, of course, she could marry a white man. The next film revelation about Indians came from the audience. In the 1940s, soon after the war, I saw a Western in a theater filled with young black people. Every time an Indian killed a white, they cheered; when a white killed an Indian, they booed and shouted ribald remarks. I had never before heard that reaction to a white-Indian battle.

Nonetheless Hollywood has made more pictures sympathetic to Native Americans than might be assumed. Many of them were red-white romances, though the couples always ran into troubles. (Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* was filmed four times.) But some have dealt frankly with the social treatment of Indians, such as *The Outsider* (1961), in which Tony Curtis played Ira Hayes, the Guadalcanal hero who ended up a neglected drunk, and *Flap* (1970), in which Victor Jory played Wounded Bear, an old correspondence-school lawyer trying to bring the government to book for violating treaties.

Powwow Highway (Warner Bros.) also concentrates on modern Indian grievances, but from its title on, it fuddles the job. (I still don't quite understand that title.) Red Bow, a young Cheyenne dissident in Montana, is a thorn in the side of a company that wants to strip-mine part of the Cheyenne reservation. In order to get him away when the vote is held, the company arranges to have his sister, down in Santa Fe, framed and arrested on drug charges. Red Bow goes down to New Mexico to help her and has adventures there and along the way.

None of the central stuff is interesting. But many of the factual details of Cheyenne life—the jobs, the socializing, the housekeeping, the pool-room talk, the pot-smoking and drinking, the tacit bonds of brotherhood among the oppressed—are affecting. On the way south, Red Bow and a fellow tribesman, Philbert Bono, who is driving him, pass various markers of important events in Indian history, and Phil wanders off to dream and chant at several of them. But the most wry moment is the one least commented on. The pair drive past Mount Rushmore, and George Washington's profile is seen, carved into a mountain looking out over vast (former) Indian lands.

Jane Heaney and Jean Stawarz wrote the screenplay, from David Seals's novel, without much skill. Jonathan Wacks directed with not much more skill. Toyomichi Kurita's cinematography is the film's best asset, though A. Martinez is competent as Red Bow and Gary Farmer, as his sweet blimp of a friend, is likable.

84 Charlie Mopic (New Century/Vista) is the radio call name of a Vietnam reconnaissance unit sent out with a motion-picture cameraman attached. The film is fiction pretending to be a documentary. Everything is seen through the "documentary" camera as the six-man unit moves through the jungle for a few days and gets into combat. At the end the camera escapes on a helicopter with the two survivors of the unit. The focus is mostly close-up; the film is often—rightly—shaky. Also rightly, after initial jokes and resentment about the camera, the men forget that it's there.

Patrick Duncan, a Vietnam veteran, wrote and directed, and made his film on a small budget in 16 days, shooting in California. The cast is experienced but not well known. The fact that 84 Charlie is made up of the familiar mix—a New Yorker, a black, a Southern white, etc.—is probably due more to verity than cinema cliché. Other Vietnam veterans have testified to the credibility of the picture.

But the pressing question is: Why did we need a fictional re-creation of a Vietnam documentary? The genuine articles exist. The outstanding one, to my knowledge, is *A Face of War* (reviewed June 1, 1968), made by Eugene S. Jones, with two other cameramen and a sound recordist. In 1966 Jones and team spent 97 days with a Marine company in Viet-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Chocolat. *A young Frenchwoman revisits her childhood in a French African colony and sees the changes that time has wrought. Claire Denis, writer and director of this autobiographical work, has a quiet but clear talent. (Reviewed 4/17/89)* **Hanussen**. *Adventures of an Austrian clairvoyant in the days of Hitler's rise. Ambience richer than the story. From the same director and actor who made* Mephisto *and* Colonel Redl. *(4/10/89)* **Lawrence of Arabia**. *Hurrah, 25 years later, for everyone concerned. Now restored to its full length and re-recorded, it's magnificent. (2/20/89)* **New York Stories**. *Three noted directors tell tales of Manhattan. Francis Coppola's, about a rich child in a luxe hotel, is the dud in the middle, flanked by Martin Scorsese's heated account of a SoHo painter's life and Woody Allen's overlong but funny Jewish-mother joke. (3/27/89)* —**SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nam, during which more than half the company were killed or wounded. To put it considerately, *A Face of War* makes Duncan's film redundant.

The best fiction films about Vietnam grasped matters that documentaries couldn't handle—which is why fiction was needed. *Platoon*, despite its morality-play armature and its syrupy voice-over, was an excellently made attempt to depict a pilgrimage from civilian sanity to war's accommodated insanity. *Hamburger Hill*, which simulated infernal combat conditions, was able to present them more pointedly, more objectively, than a camera trapped in the occasion could have done. But Duncan's "documentary" adds little to what Jones fixed painfully in 1966.

The Anthology Film Archives in New York, an "International Center for Preservation, Study & Exhibition of Independent Film and Video," is courageously dedicated to unconventional work. Yet it often varies its programs with historically important conventional films. One such bill—absolutely fascinating—was a recent two-hour program of 130 films by Louis and Auguste Lumière, each 30 seconds to one minute in length. Some Lumière films have always been available; but these were more than I had ever seen, and all were fresh prints from restored originals.

In 1895 Louis Lumière, trained in physics and chemistry, invented the Cinématographe, France's entry in the Who-Invented-Film? sweepstakes. His elder brother Auguste, a physician, helped him often and extensively. In December 1895 they gave the first public exhibition of their work in Paris; before long, Paris, then France, then the world went mad. The first films were made by the brothers, and as success flooded them, they hired assistants to travel, some to far foreign countries, and send back footage. Their 1907 catalog listed 1,400 items. Most of these were non-fiction: parades, gatherings, royalty and statesmen, arrivals and departures of trains and ships, people at work in all kinds of jobs. A few of the films were skits or records of acrobatic and magic acts.

There is no editing within an item; the camera never moves—at least, not in the dolly sense. Sometimes it's mounted on a moving vehicle, like a Venetian gondola. The lack of visual variety is more than recompensed by the sense of being present at the creation.

No wonder that so many of the first writers about film felt that the millennium had arrived. Everything in the world, of every kind, was now about to become available to all. Walter Benjamin noted that the advent of photography, early in the 19th century, was simultaneous with

INVEST IN ISRAEL'S FUTURE
INVEST IN AMPAL

When you invest in Ampal, you enable us to provide long-term capital for Israel's industrial development. From orange groves to seaside hotels, from underwater observatories to gas and oil distribution, from high-tech enterprises to science-based R & D, Ampal helps build Israel's industrial future.

11% ZERO COUPON DEBENTURE
• $10,000 yields $47,847 in 15 years

With an Ampal investment
100% of your investment goes to work immediately for you • Principal and interest are payable in U.S. dollars.
An American corporation, Ampal is a driving financial force that helps Israel grow productively.

Also available: Fixed Rate Current Income and Variable Rate Current Income debentures.
For more information and a prospectus on any of these securities, call Ampal Securities Corporation.

1-800-445-6508 In Wisconsin: 414-352-8870

Member NASD and SIPC

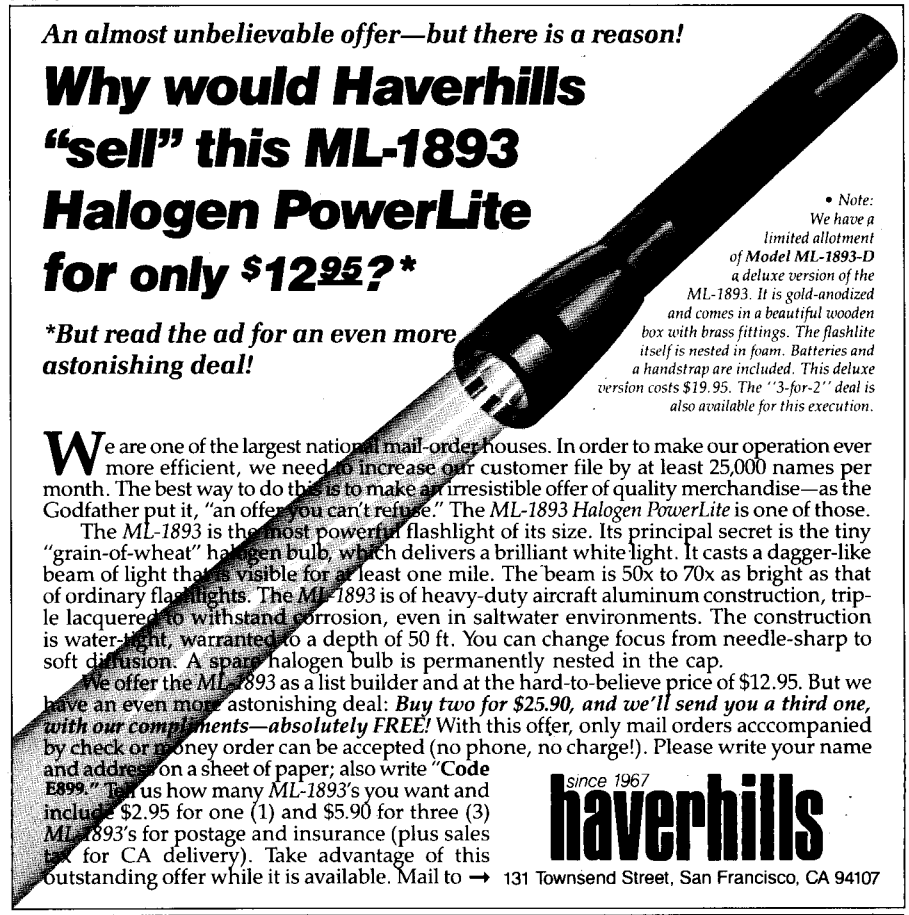
This is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy securities. The offer is made only by the prospectus which may be obtained in any state wherein the underwriter may lawfully offer the securities.

AMPAL
AMERICAN ISRAEL CORPORATION
Your American Corporate Connection to Israel
10 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020-1956

An almost unbelievable offer—but there is a reason!

Why would Haverhills "sell" this ML-1893 Halogen PowerLite for only $12.95?*

But read the ad for an even more astonishing deal!



• *Note: We have a limited allotment of* ***Model ML-1893-D*** *a deluxe version of the ML-1893. It is gold-anodized and comes in a beautiful wooden box with brass fittings. The flashlite itself is nested in foam. Batteries and a handstrap are included. This deluxe version costs $19.95. The "3-for-2" deal is also available for this execution.*

We are one of the largest national mail-order houses. In order to make our operation ever more efficient, we need to increase our customer file by at least 25,000 names per month. The best way to do this is to make an irresistible offer of quality merchandise—as the Godfather put it, "an offer you can't refuse." The *ML-1893 Halogen PowerLite* is one of those.

The *ML-1893* is the most powerful flashlight of its size. Its principal secret is the tiny "grain-of-wheat" halogen bulb, which delivers a brilliant white light. It casts a dagger-like beam of light that is visible for at least one mile. The beam is 50x to 70x as bright as that of ordinary flashlights. The *ML-1893* is of heavy-duty aircraft aluminum construction, triple lacquered to withstand corrosion, even in saltwater environments. The construction is water-tight, warranted to a depth of 50 ft. You can change focus from needle-sharp to soft diffusion. A spare halogen bulb is permanently nested in the cap.

We offer the *ML-1893* as a list builder and at the hard-to-believe price of $12.95. But we have an even more astonishing deal: ***Buy two for $25.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** With this offer, only mail orders acccompanied by check or money order can be accepted (no phone, no charge!). Please write your name and address on a sheet of paper; also write "**Code E899.**" Tell us how many *ML-1893*'s you want and include $2.95 for one (1) and $5.90 for three (3) *ML-1893*'s for postage and insurance (plus sales tax for CA delivery). Take advantage of this outstanding offer while it is available. Mail to →

since 1967
haverhills
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the rise of socialism. I've always thought that these two events, literally discrete, were atmospherically related. A political system was promulgated that carried equality to new reaches at the same time that a new technology made all faces equal. Every human being's face became reproducible, not only the faces of those who could afford to engage portrait painters. The advent of the motion picture some 70 years later seemed to change the emphasis—from asserting every individual's importance to placing the world at every individual's disposal. No matter what happened subsequently in the use of film, that moment must have been marvelous.

As in numerous early films, the gradations of light and shadow in some of these Lumière items are lovely.

The Last New Leftists

BY PAUL BERMAN

Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties by Peter Collier and David Horowitz

(Summit Books, 352 pp., $19.95)

New Left autobiographies characteristically tell a tale of two conversions: the conversion into the Movement, then a quiet tiptoe, when things go sour and scary, out the door, usually with a good deal of regret and puzzlement. Todd Gitlin, in *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, described how, without surrendering his old ideals, he quietly stole away to graduate school. In a recent essay called "Coming Down Again: After the Age of Excess," Ellen Willis delicately returned, via depression and psychoanalysis, from the highlands of chemical-sexual experimentation to "Nuclear Familydom," feminist-style, of course. Tom Hayden's second conversion, after his wing of the Berkeley left lapsed into cult authoritarianism, brought him to brown rice, to his Irish heritage, and to the state assembly. Sometimes the second conversion departs politics altogether. Lewis Cole, in a book called *Dream Team* about the New York Knicks, told how, after years as an SDS leader at Columbia and a faithful supporter of the Black Panther Party, he found a new life as a basketball fan.

Peter Collier and David Horowitz's new book presents itself as the anti-'60s memoir, especially anti-Gitlin and anti-Hayden, who are excoriated for harboring excessive loyalties to the past. Where Collier and Horowitz tread, nostalgia does not bloom. Nor did their own second conversions bring them to graduate school, feminist family life, brown rice, or basketball; or to any other green and shady place likely to seem respectable in New Leftist eyes, such as tomato farming or Hasidism. The authors became Republicans.

A bizarre tale. Even so, their story, too, follows the stations of the genre: arrival at Berkeley, Movement excitements, bewilderment, moral crisis, personal hurt, tiptoe out. And if the authors wind up beyond the pale, hurling ghastly insults at their old comrades, mightn't that show Collier and Horowitz to be, in the end, more loyal, not less, to the insurrectionary past than other Movement autobiographers; more authentic, not less; the sole militants of the '60s still good for a shocking gesture, a finger in the air, a coast-to-coast fuck you? The transformation that these men have undergone should not, I think, be overestimated.

The Collier-Horowitz collaboration has endured two decades and more than one turn around the field. At the Movement's height in the late '60s and early '70s, the authors labored together for *Ramparts* magazine. Then they took up dynastic biography and wrote *The Rockefellers*, *The Kennedys*, and *The Fords*. Lately they have dragged their plow through the furrows of conservative activism. *Destructive Generation*, because it compiles magazine articles and other pieces from the authors' middle and later periods, has the look of a farm shed after too many winters. A few passages lean vaguely leftward, everything else leans sharply to the right. Marx's line about tragedy and farce litters the ground every 50 pages or so.

Yet Collier and Horowitz write vigorously, and in two of the chapters—their history of the Weather Underground and their study of Fay Stender, a lawyer for the Black Panthers—they have produced pieces of lasting value. These chapters go to the heart of the matter, to the explosive quality of the New Left, to the notion, so crucial to the New Left's appeal, that you can batter down your own limitations, that conventions are oppressions, that an existential choice can turn you into something better, more heroic, more powerful. Nothing about that idea, as things turned out, inherently tied it to socialist or liberal ideals. In the early years, fortuitous circumstances—the moral leadership of Martin Luther King and colleagues, the lingering ideological influence of social democrats within the left, liberals in the White House, national calm (none of these things a particular favorite of the New Left)—kept energies in check, not always easily. Existential explosions generally pointed in productive directions, and the Movement had its several successes.

But without the fortuitous circumstances? That is where *Destructive Generation* begins. The Weather Underground that Collier and Horowitz describe used sexual experiments and personal challenges and a sort of Visigothic Marxism to push the logic of self-transformation to the point of self-destruction: first politically, then morally, then physically, on West 11th Street in Manhattan. Fay Stender was an idealistic lawyer who lost her balance so badly that she went from honest civil rights work to falling in love with violent convicts in the sexually addled delusion that they were leaders of the impending revolution. They turned out to be criminals. She was crippled in an attack by a member of something called the Black Guerrilla Family, and committed suicide in the aftermath.

The chapters on Weatherman and Stender came out years ago as magazine articles and were said, on the unreconstructed back lots of Cambridge and Berkeley, to have calumniated the left. They hadn't. The research was so careful that errors, when they crept in, were almost always insignificant (it wasn't Mark Rudd who sat in the president of Columbia University's chair, it was the poet David Shapiro). Perhaps interpretations could be quarrelled with: too much emphasis on leather miniskirts and sexual hysterias, too little on ideas, on the corrupting influence of the Vietnam War, on Nixon. But the portraits looked human. They showed some compassion about the ways in which originally decent people could ruin themselves. Stender's seriousness was never questioned, just her judgment. Rudd, an early refugee from Weather madness, rueful over what had happened, concerned about his own moral responsibility, emerged as a sympathetic figure. (It is later in *Destructive Generation*, after the authors have gone over to conservatism, that they savage Rudd by mischaracterizing a speech he gave last year at Columbia. They say he "spoke in praise of two of his fallen com-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rades"—one a victim of the 11th Street bomb, the other a prisoner from the 1981 Brinks robbery. But Rudd didn't praise the bomb or the robbery; he remembered his two friends with fondness, and said they brought the tragedies on themselves; and he used the word "murder" about the Brinks affair.)

And if the articles were, after all, pretty sensational, that wasn't because the authors went too far. No, if anything, they could have gone further—perhaps they do go further, though in ways that some readers may fail to recognize. Their third chapter, "Post-Vietnam Syndrome," may seem badly out of place. The authors describe two Marine veterans, white and black, who enlisted in the corps, became friends, fought in Vietnam, and found themselves afterward on the streets of San Francisco, one man a cop, the other a drug dealer and criminal. It's an *Angels with Dirty Faces* story, a study of the problems of veterans in readjusting to civilian life, not anything about the left.

Yet this story, too, has to do with existential choices. Collier and Horowitz insist that the Marine who turned to crime knew what decision he was making, recognized other alternatives, and chose crime for the same reason that his Marine buddy chose police work. For the kick and the danger, for the life of action. And maybe in this oblique and distant way, through the description of men who played no role at all in the left-wing milieu, Collier and Horowitz do broach issues that appear only secondarily in their tales of Weather sex orgiasts and unbalanced lawyers.

Crime will always be, after all, the simplest, the most obvious, the most Miltonic, of rebellions. In the years after '68, in the age when the White House itself was full of gangster-talking tough guys, the straight and the crooked got impossibly tangled. All sorts of nihilists and authoritarian phenomena blossomed on the left. And in that environment, a wing of the student movement, overradicalized, demoralized, unorganized, seemingly defeated in its struggle against the war, found itself in the situation of a beaten and abandoned jungle army, and turned to a kind of banditry, like the remnant armies in Burma after World War II. The transformation was extreme: from saintly civil disobedience to straightforward political rioting to honest hardworking marijuana distributorships to generalized rebellion—and onward via slimy shoplifting into zones where the types with masks over their faces weren't New Leftists in any conventional sense at all. Nor were they peaceniks throwing tantrums, nor Luciferian

Due to a production error
a detail of the image above
was printed in reverse in the 4/10/89 issue
in an announcement of an exhibition of
the prints and drawings of
David Schorr.
The image is one panel of a triptych, an engraving:
Davidsbundlers Recover the Rhinegold.

This engraving, along with David Schorr's other work, including the originals of the portraits which appear regularly in The New Republic, are available through the Mary Ryan Gallery, 452 Columbus Avenue, New York City 10024. Tel: (212) 799-2304.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

angels, but, deep in their souls, criminals—the soulless ones, the heavyweights.

Outlaw leftism tended to be inarticulate, anti-intellectual, without ideological spokesmen (except, in a marginal way, the Yippie writers, who spoke in a loopy language that was more of a joke than anything else). But in the San Francisco Bay Area—perhaps the existence of a magazine like *Ramparts* was not unhelpful—an authentic criminal-intellectual left-wing culture did spring up. The notable figures were Stender's client George Jackson (epistolary essayist, accused of several prison murders), her other client Huey P. Newton (political theorist, self-acknowledged pimp and burglar), and Eldridge Cleaver (rapist, essayist, *Ramparts* editor). These men were criminal-intellectuals not just sociologically, because of bottom-dog backgrounds, but because something was lacking in their moral sense. A faculty was missing, the ability to see themselves truly or to make moral judgments.

These writers had a powerful theme. They pointed to their own degradation, to horrible prison experiences, to years of suffering, then attributed these things to impersonal social forces like racism and imperialism. The uglier they showed their degradation to be, the stronger was their condemnation of the impersonal forces; until at last, with brutally spare confessions of their own crimes ("I became a rapist," Cleaver wrote) they could damn the impersonal forces as corrupt, unreformable, revolting. The more violent and criminal they had been, the more their political enemies were to blame. There was a truth in this, and a lie. But there was no bad conscience. These men weren't fakes; they were defectives. They could look the reader in the eye and say anything at all with vast reserves of indignation. They were virtuosos of the pointed finger. Meanwhile Newton and Cleaver ran a political party that more and more became, as *Destructive Generation* properly says, "a criminal gang extorting the ghetto."

Recalling these figures in the autobiographical sections of their book, Collier and Horowitz nearly shudder with physical aversion, as if no one was more appalled than they by criminal-intellectuals. They portray the times they spent in Newton's Lakeview living room, watching the exalted "Minister of Defense," "Supreme Commander," and "Supreme Servant of the People" prance shirtless in front of his guests, as for them, if not a horror, at least an offense to their sense of taste. Collier recalls sitting with Cleaver at a *Ramparts* meeting, aghast at the ex-rapist's Stalinist instincts and his ignorance of Marxist history. Horowitz must have resented the ignorance in an even keener way. As a young man he had rebelled against his parents' Communist Party Stalinism to become a disciple of Isaac Deutscher, Trotsky's biographer. In the late '60s he made genuine efforts to warn the left against political primitivism, against the fads for vulgar Leninism and Maoist fantasies.

Still, if thousands of leftists and liberals did enthuse over the Black Panther Party in those years, if large parts of the public became convinced that Panthers were a Marxist-influenced improvement over the insufficiently radical legacy of Martin Luther King, if in cities far from Oakland there were numbers of young black militants who went so far as to enlist briefly in the party's ranks honestly out of that belief, it was partly because Peter Collier and David Horowitz were toiling hard to promote the Panther cause. There was a time, Collier tells us, when the Panthers became "something like a wholly owned subsidiary" of *Ramparts*. The magazine was, after all, the great propagandist for the Panther cause, infinitely superior to the grisly monthly paper that the Panthers put out for themselves. Some of Cleaver's essays appeared in *Ramparts*, which also published the paperback edition of *Soul on Ice*.

Nor did Collier's and Horowitz's involvement prove brief. The masses of Panther supporters everywhere else gradually came to dislike the bloodcurdling threats in the party paper. They came to look coldly on the black leather military uniforms, came to see the Panthers as ever more thuggish and ugly, began to cringe when Panther speakers got up at Movement demonstrations to threaten universal violence; and the masses drifted away. Even in the Movement's most militant student quarters, as early as the spring of 1971, the dreams of revolution had taken a hippie-tribal turn, allergic to anything so uncouth as a uniform or a hierarchy. The age of George McGovern, when it came, was no longer, by and large, an era of Panther fantasies. The Panthers themselves tiptoed out the door at a steady rate, often in terror for their lives.

But not Collier and Horowitz. The reservations they felt—which, to be sure, never had any practical effect—somehow evaporated. *Destructive Generation* doesn't make clear how this could have happened. Were the authors' Panther loyalties their own late-in-the-day version of nihilist existentialism, partly left-wing, partly criminal, rich with the sinner's thrill that can never attach to ordinary political work? Did the authors overcome the old-fashioned Marxist aversion to lumpen proletarians as a kind of barrier-breaking obligation they took on themselves, the way Weatherpeople imposed homosexuality on one another? In any case, Collier and Horowitz stuck to their guns—literally, since they tell us that they stored Panther weapons.

Their commitment to Huey Newton's extortionist gang/paramilitary party deepened. This deepening lies at the core of *Destructive Generation*. The story is told twice, both times sparingly. Horowitz, in his own chapter, reports that in 1973 he joined a Panther campaign in the East Oakland ghetto. It was not—he insists on this—because he approved of Panther authoritarianism or violence. By 1973, he says, the Panthers were renouncing violence and "Leninist posturing too"—though somebody else might have observed that this was only because the Panthers were becoming ever more clearly a sick cult, losing whatever Marxist-style morality they may once have projected. Horowitz "allowed" himself to be persuaded to join them in an educational project for East Oakland. He raised money, he bought them a building, he did everything to get the enterprise under way. "I found a bookkeeper named Betty Van Patter to keep its accounts. In the winter of 1974"—he means late 1974—:

> the Panthers murdered Betty Van Patter and ended my career in the Left. I suspected, and was later told by the Panthers, that they had committed the crime. There were others in the Left who suspected them too, people who knew that Betty was not the only person the Panthers had killed.

Collier, in his section, paints a clearer picture of nihilist degeneration: "We now began to talk of ourselves as 'Marxist-Leninists.' " So there *had* been an ideological development. The Marxist sophistication that Horowitz had championed dropped away: "Marxist-Leninist" is a phrase from Stalin, not Deutscher. Collier and Horowitz took to hanging out with Berkeley's "Red Family," the cult group that Tom Hayden had fallen into. And Collier acknowledges, as if between his teeth, that he and Horowitz, not just "others in the Left," did know something about the Panthers:

> There had been rumors on the left for a long time that the Panthers had used the Santa Cruz Mountains as a sort of killing grounds, where they got rid of members who had been accused, in councils of pandemonium, of being "police agents." We not only ignored these rumors; we said that it was *good* for a vanguard organization to purge its ranks of informers.

Now, "to purge ranks" obviously

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

means, in this context, to murder. Collier and Horowitz, in short, approved of Panther murders—precisely because the Panthers were, in fact, a "vanguard organization," which is to say, a Leninist leadership in a Third World guerrilla style. Collier says:

> Our interest in the Panthers (David's always greater than mine) continued even when Huey fled to Cuba after being charged with the murder of an Oakland prostitute. In the weeks that followed, David convinced the *Ramparts* bookkeeper, a woman named Betty Van Patter, to help the Party get its books in order.

So Horowitz didn't just "find" a bookkeeper. He talked her into it, in his colleague's version. "Apparently she stumbled onto information that they were dealing in drugs and protections rackets. Wanting them to live up to her radical high hopes, she must have confronted them with what she had learned. The next thing we heard, she had been found floating in the bay, her head caved in by a blow from a heavy object."

Their conclusion, as Collier puts it, is this: "The Black Panther Party, which had begun as a street gang, had never really changed. They had just allowed us white radicals to project our violent fantasies about 'avant gardes' onto them. They had remained a gang. The gang, it occurred to me, might be an appropriate metaphor for the Left as a whole."

That last sentence *is* a calumny. "The Left as a whole" was not a gang, least of all a gang of murderers. "The Left as a whole," in the winter of 1974, was a scene out of Emerson's essay on the Chardon Street Convention of 1840:

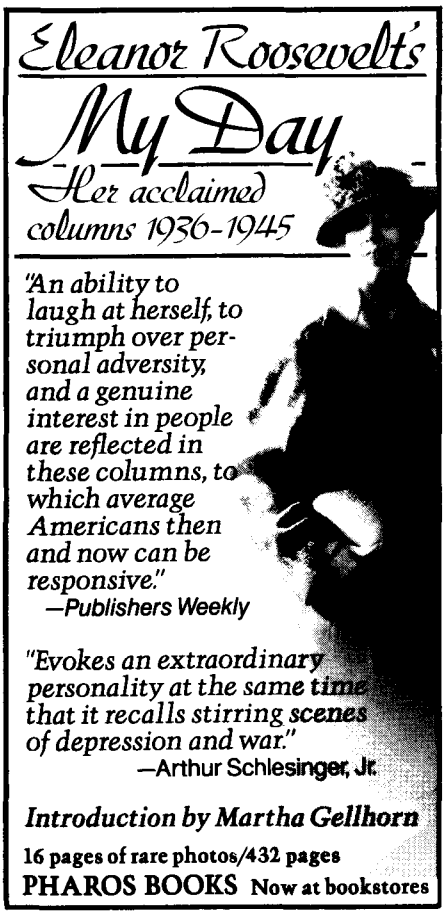
> Madmen, madwomen, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-Day-Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians, and Philosophers—all came successively to the top, and seized *their moment, if not their hour*, wherein to chide, or pray, or preach, or protest. . . .

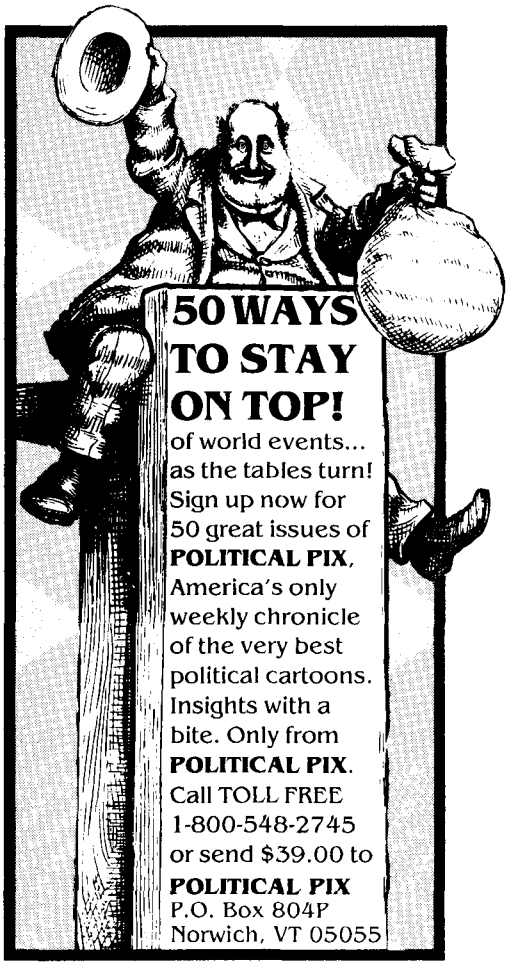
Friends of Kim Il Sung were there, champions of the PLO, Fidelistas. Albanian Marxists. Huey P. Newtonians? Likewise. But by 1974 their *hour* was so long passed that finding them was difficult.

The dominant New Left organization in New York City that year, to cite one example, was an upstanding alternative school movement of several hundred people called the Free Association, animated by Stanley Aronowitz and others, devoted to libertarian socialism, radical feminism, and gay rights, that is to say, people who had rebelled in one way or another against Marxist-Leninist or Third Worldist orthodoxies. Elderly Wobblies from 1920 haunted the halls. But Panthers, in those meetings, never; nor would they have been welcome, considering that, from a socialist, anarchist, Wobbly, feminist, or gay rights perspective, not to mention the perspective of common sense, the Supreme Servant of the People was slightly louche.

Maybe in California things were different. The Panthers there had begun to penetrate the power structure. But even there "the Left as a whole" had nothing to do with the murder of Betty Van Patter. David Horowitz had something remotely to do with it, yes. Perhaps a significant amount, too, depending on how straightforward he'd been with the bookkeeper when he got her to do the East Oakland accounts. Doubtless Collier also bore a smidgen of responsibility, as a colleague at *Ramparts* and Panther supporter. The two men certainly went through a moral trauma over what happened. In *Destructive Generation*, though, they manage to turn this trauma into a theme that is not, ultimately, about individual responsibility. They look the reader in the eye, they point to their own part in what occurred, and the deeper their moral culpability appears to go, the more their political enemies are to blame. In the end, guilt passes from the individuals who might in fact share it to an impersonal social force, this time called "the Left as a whole," just as, in the writings of Newton, Cleaver, and George Jackson, the matter of criminal guilt for sundry violent crimes passed with amazing literary gusto to . . . well, wherever.

So Collier and Horowitz have converted. But to what? *Destructive Generation* takes on the condition of Berkeley (the fault of the left), the nature of American leftism (seditious), the manner in which Collier and Horowitz have been covered in the press (unfair), the death of both men's fathers, and other themes recognizable to the millions who have lately seen or heard the authors on TV or radio; and the conservatism that arises from these chapters seems a little shaky, philosophically. There are moments when the authors present themselves as cold war liberals, when they protest that their new conservatism is "a reaffirmation of the old liberalism that has become 'conservative.' " At other times they invoke the old liberalism that hasn't become conservative. (Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. makes a brief appearance.) And in still other passages the authors sound, in scattered phrases, like no one so much as their hated adversary Gitlin, with his good/bad, early/late view of New Leftism. While the Movement's day in the sun may have been the "worst of times," it was also "the best of times," and so forth. Of course, the authors also blame


Eleanor Roosevelt's
My Day
Her acclaimed columns 1936-1945
"An ability to laugh at herself, to triumph over personal adversity, and a genuine interest in people are reflected in these columns, to which average Americans then and now can be responsive."
—Publishers Weekly
"Evokes an extraordinary personality at the same time that it recalls stirring scenes of depression and war."
—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.
Introduction by Martha Gellhorn
16 pages of rare photos/432 pages
PHAROS BOOKS Now at bookstores


50 WAYS TO STAY ON TOP!
of world events... as the tables turn! Sign up now for 50 great issues of POLITICAL PIX, America's only weekly chronicle of the very best political cartoons. Insights with a bite. Only from POLITICAL PIX. Call TOLL FREE 1-800-548-2745 or send $39.00 to POLITICAL PIX P.O. Box 804P Norwich, VT 05055

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the New Left for all the ills of the present moment, for drug addiction, drug crime, feminized poverty, and AIDS.

Moving along, the authors define conservatism as wisdom itself. Horowitz speaks of "respect for the accumulated wisdom of human traditions; regard for the ordinary realities of human lives; distrust of optimism based on human reason; caution in the face of tragedies past." Then the spirit of caution moves along, too, and the authors commence to resurrect Whittaker Chambers, down to an imitation of the literary forms in Chambers's *Witness*. Chambers wrote a "Letter to My Children"; Horowitz contributes a "Letter to a Political Friend."

In this mood, the authors serve up many grandiloquent phrases, always in the form of a pointed finger. "What motivates the Left is an Idea whose true consciousness is this: *Everything human is alien*." They quote Ludwig Van Mises: "Socialism is the grandiose rationalization of petty resentments." They speak of the religious confusion and moral corruption that define "the utopianism of the Left," and they point to the "dark center of the radical heart: not compassion, but resentment—the envious whine of *have not* and *want*; not the longing for justice but the desire for revenge; not a quest for peace but a call to arms," and so on. Reptilian images recur. "Like the slowly metamorphosing monster of a horror film, the left has actually been re-creating itself. . . ." "Never mind that the sloughed-off skins it leaves behind are fossilized remains of the death and destruction caused by its past commitments. . . ."

By leftism, Collier and Horowitz generally mean socialism; and by socialism, they mean what is upheld in countries such as France or Spain by relatively small Communist Parties, not what is upheld by huge Socialist Parties. Which is to say, leftism is communism. At other times the authors mean American liberalism; here again they seem to believe, as Chambers did, that liberalism, too, is a form of communism. Collier and Horowitz are inconsistent on this question. In any event, they take the doomsday view of the whole thing. Communism is advancing to world conquest, prospects are grimmer and grimmer, the global situation is infinitely worse than during the height of the cold war. "The clock is running on democracy and freedom"—even in America. Thus "it is hardly surprising that when Reagan took office, he was presented with a report by intelligence advisers who concluded that 'the threat to the internal security of the Republic is greater today than at any time since World War Two.' "

Some people may, actually, find this surprising. How little they know! For, during the Reagan era, the danger has metamorphosed ever more monstrously. This is because leftism, in the modern period, has reverted to the mendacious traditions of 1930s Stalinism. Thirties-style front groups have re-emerged in the name of Third World solidarity campaigns; the writings of Lillian Hellman have become the Bible of left-wing morality; and while some leftists pretend to themselves to support neither the Soviet Union nor any other kind of communism, they manage to blame communism's every failing on the United States, which always turns out to be the enemy after all.

Are these indictments entirely, or only largely, mad? Looking at the world as a whole, one would have to say, entirely, given the late developments in communism. Likewise looking at the left in the democratic countries, where interest in communism declines with every new election and subscription drive. The postwar anti-colonial revolution is mostly over; the tendency to identify with Third World vanguards has faded; inspirations of a different kind have emerged. The issues that have brought students into the streets of Paris during the '80s are matters of university reform and human rights. They have nothing to do with communism, except perhaps to oppose it in the name of human rights.

It may be, though, that in America student and leftist movements tend to be a little retrograde. The conflict in Central America is one of the last struggles anywhere in the world to reflect significant features of postwar anti-colonialism; and in that circumstance, several wings of the American left remain stuck in attitudes that socialist and radical currents in other countries have abandoned—an identification with Third World vanguards, a tendency to regard the Great Satan as the seat of all evil, a taste for Stalinist journalism and conspiracy theories, plus a habit of dissembling. These instincts do exist. They show up in the Central American solidarity movements of the 1980s and among certain church groups, lobbyists, and other activists. In Nicaragua, internationalist volunteers have come from all the Western countries to work on public projects, and even in those circles the Americans among them are notorious for the ingenuousness of their enthusiasm for the Nicaraguan government, for their inability to draw conclusions from unhappy experiences elsewhere in the postcolonial world. In that respect, Collier's and Horowitz's arguments are not in every instance foreign to reality.

At the same time, American leftism—I don't even mention liberalism that is not of the left—feels the same winds that prevail in the other advanced democracies, which means that human rights, too, are in the ascendant. Will anyone be astonished to notice contradictory results? On the American left, there are a small number who know themselves to be social democratic or otherwise anti-communist on philosophical grounds, and a small number who know themselves to be communists or fellow travelers. But the great mass, not exactly heirs to powerful traditions of theory, refuses to think in those categories and consequently shifts, now one way, now the other, depending on how issues are presented. Students flock to Third World solidarity concerts and they flock to human rights concerts. There are people who admire Castro *and* Walesa, and puzzle over how to square that circle. In the matter of Salman Rushdie, the left divides, libertarians and democrats on one side, anti-imperialists on the other.

The magazines of the left, with a few exceptions, find themselves torn by internal debates over these questions: over the Sandinistas, for instance. Horowitz and Collier devote several pages to Noam Chomsky, who in recent years has taken over from Horowitz himself the task of expounding what the authors call the "devil theory" of American foreign policy (America is bad, and wherever communism is bad, America is to blame). Chomsky, they say, is the "intellectual godfather of the post-Vietnam left," its dominant theoretician. But anyone who reads the left-wing press knows that Chomsky, too, popular as he is, figures at the center of controversy, revered in some magazines, disdained in others, sometimes attacked and defended on neighboring pages. The Marxist editors of *New Politics* run Chomsky's name on the masthead and inside brilliantly carve him up for failing to see the "totalitarian ideological bent" of the Sandinistas.

How is it that none of this appears in *Destructive Generation*? Collier and Horowitz could have painted American leftism with utter realism, contradictions included, and stuck the image on a placard, and inspired quite an outpouring of anti-left-wing indignation. But somehow the talents that they brought to their articles on Stender and Weatherman—the scrupulousness of their research, the eye for fine distinctions, the human sense—go up in smoke when they turn to American leftism in the post-Betty Van Patter period. For the authors are embarked, finally, on a jihad against the dark centers of the radical heart, the metamorphosing monster, the ticking clock. They make a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

few observations that are not altogether stupid, figure they've done enough, and draw their scimitars. The discussion suddenly takes on a grave tone. In the face of the ever growing world communist threat, Collier and Horowitz do not choose merely to signal disapproval of, say, supporters of the Salvadoran guerrillas. They declare instead that American leftism is the enemy behind the lines, the stabber in the back. It is a "Fifth Column." It is devoted to "treachery." Its "target was—and is—America."

Names begin to fly about. Congressman Ron Dellums's severed head bounces by, then the head of one of his staff. Senator Tom Harkin's head sails past. The editors of the *Nation* bounce down the stairs (in their case, decapitated by their own blade, since recent talk of Fifth Columns in America began with Gore Vidal's *Nation* attack on neoconservative Jews). Nobody is directly labeled an enemy agent, except for people who are not only dead but guilty, like Julius Rosenberg. It is conceivable that in some instances Collier and Horowitz mean to level accusations somewhat less horrifying than treason. But once having raised the issue of a Fifth Column, they don't know how to lower it; and the implication hovers ever after.

Sometimes they offer a shred of seeming corroboration. In the case of William Leogrande (of American University and a commentator on Central America for CBS) and Robert Borosage (of the Jesse Jackson campaign and the Institute for Policy Studies), the evidence consists of a bar conversation that Ronald Radosh, a friend of the authors, overheard at the Hotel Intercontinental in Managua. Leogrande and Borosage supposedly advised Alejandro Bendaña of the Sandinista Foreign Ministry on how to manipulate American liberals, and in crucial phrases ("with us," "against us") they seemed to display a fundamental loyalty to the Sandinistas.

Did it happen, that conversation? Leogrande tells me: "This story is totally false, made up of whole cloth." Borosage calls it "an invention." Neither Collier or Horowitz bothered to ask these men about it before running into print with insinuations of treason—and not just insinuations, since on another occasion, Horowitz has publicly flung the word "treason" at Leogrande and Borosage. Radosh stands by the story as a whole, but tells me that, in recounting what he heard in Managua, he never intended to suggest treason, only to challenge Leogrande's objectivity as an expert. Moreover, Collier and Horowitz got the crucial part wrong. According to Radosh, it wasn't Leogrande and Borosage who in-

You deserve to know the facts about. . .

Israel and Human Rights

How does Israel behave in the face of Arab uprising?

The so-called "intifada," the uprising of the Arab population in the territories administered by Israel has been going on for more than a year. In that time, over 350 Arabs, mostly young people, have been killed and many have been wounded. The U.S. State Department, in its *Report on Human Rights, has been critical of some aspects of Israel's human rights posture.*

What are the facts?

■ Israel is a society based on law. Every measure taken by civilian or millitary authorities is scrutinized by the country's legal authorities. In dealing with the "intifada," Israel is faced with a difficult problem—the uprising of a civilian population. This is a problem very similar to that faced by the British in Northern Ireland, by the Filipinos in its southern islands and the Spanish in the Basque provinces. Responsible government has the obligation to maintain order and to preserve law and to do so with as little loss of life and with as little injury to the civilian population as possible.

■ Israel has done just that. The loss of over 350 Arab lives is of course a tragedy—every human life is precious. But seen in context, the number of casualties is really very small and a reflection on the care and restraint of the Israeli military. Israeli soldiers are confronted daily with violent riots—massive stoning and fire bombing of persons and moving vehicles, attacks with iron bars, chains, knives, Molotov cocktails and other lethal weapons. Such violence is meant to kill. Israeli soldiers and civilians have lost their lives. Almost 1300 Israelis have been injured, some of them critically.

■ The task of the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) is made more difficult by the tactics of the Arabs in having their able-bodied adult men stay behind and having their children and their women confront the IDF. It is a no-win situation for the Israelis. They try to avoid death and injury at all cost. But death and injury are sometimes unavoidable in riot situations. Since Israel is an open society, reporters and television crews from all around the world have access to the happenings, quite a few of which are staged for their benefit. Obviously it is a public relations disaster for the Israelis to have the world see their troops confronting women and children. Those women and children, however, wish to inflect as much damage as they possibly can. They mean to kill.

■ The IDF, one of the finest armies in the world, is trained to defend the country's borders, and not for riot control. Therefore, almost inevitably, errors were made in the initial phases of the uprising. But from the very beginning, detailed instructions were given to the troops on how to react to any given provocation. The orders under which Israeli military personnel operate are specific and well known to every soldier. Those who break the rules are subject to military trial and punishment. The principles of restraint and gradual response are applied. Tear gas is used to control riots. Live bullets are fired only in life-threatening situations. But to some, every means of riot control used by the Israelis, including police batons or rubber or plastic bullets is objectionable.

■ Those residents of the territories who are suspected to have committed serious security offenses are dealt with in full accordance with international law and the humanitarian provisions of the Geneva Conventions. All residents have full access to the Israeli legal system—even to the Israeli Supreme Court. Prisons are unhappy places in every society. But Israeli prisons and detentions centers in which those arrested for security offenses are held, are fully comparable to and adhere to the standards of those in other advanced Western democracies. Certainly, not even the most rebellious Arab detainee in Israel would prefer to serve time in a Syrian, Jordanian, Iraqi or Saudi prison instead.

Within the context of massive human rights abuses throughout the Arab world, the focus on Israel seems to be entirely out of perspective. Other countries in the Middle East lack the most basic elements of human rights—freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free elections, equality for women, freedom of religion, freedom of association. Opponents, instead of facing television cameras, face execution. Those countries do not have to defend themselves against foes who are single-mindedly intent on their destruction. Yet, those nations do not draw the enormous degree of attention that Israel receives. Israel adheres to the highest moral and legal principles. It does so, surrounded though it is by implacable enemies, and consistent with its own security requirements and with its obligation to the international community to maintain law and order in the territories it administers.

This ad has been published and paid for by

CAMERA

Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America

P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

CAMERA is a tax-deductible, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is to combat media inaccuracies, through public education and publicity. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in newspapers and magazines. Our overhead is minimal. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work and for these clarifying messages.

Yes, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in countering anti-Israel and anti-Zionist propaganda. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of

$ _____. N.R./21

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: CAMERA, P.O. Box 590359, San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dicated Sandinista loyalties with the words "with us" and "against us." It was Bendaña, the Sandinista. Not to mention that the conversation was sometimes drowned out by a mariachi band.

Collier and Horowitz pause briefly to consider the dangers of being called McCarthyites. Cries of McCarthyism, they say, are the refuge of scoundrels, the first recourse of communists, invoked to inhibit discussion of the communist issue. That is true, of course, as far as the comment goes. Yet McCarthyism exists, just as communism exists. *Destructive Generation* is a McCarthyite book. It has all the McCarthyite qualities, the stab in the back thinking, the lumping together, the fervid tone, the Manichaean mania, the errors that go spiraling into the giddy stratosphere of what-the-hell. And as in the original McCarthyism, the targets get bigger and bigger. Collier says that after he and Horowitz voted for Reagan in 1984, they were bitterly denounced by old friends and found themselves bristling:

> After one such encounter, I told David that I felt like an American for the first time in 25 years. As someone born into the emotional and political ghetto of the Communist Party, with an alienation far greater than mine had ever been, he shook his head in agreement: "I feel like an American for the first time in my life."

Over where the surly masses who voted for Walter Mondale sit, a gray unpleasant drizzle has begun to fall.

They get wilder still. "I have not exchanged one ideology for another," Horowitz writes. "I have freed myself from the chains of an Idea." Collier says: "After my years as a New Leftist, I could never join another movement." And at this point one's attention does have to turn from the American left and its sins and contradictions to the American right. For Collier and Horowitz have risen mightily in the American right since their first public announcement of conversion, a mere four years ago. Collier sits on the dais at the Committee for the Free World. Their names adorn the cover of *Commentary*. Their editorials are distributed to newspapers around the country. They are ubiquitous on radio and television. (According to one of their press releases, they were on radio for 31 hours in 1987 alone.)

These men are the new stars of American conservatism. How far are conservatives prepared to go with them? All the way down, or only part of the way? Say what you will about the monthly organ of the American Jewish Committee, that magazine surely never found itself sharing a writer with *Soldier of Fortune*, the organ of the gunman ultraright, until it took to featuring David Horowitz. Or is *Soldier of Fortune* now OK?

Horowitz's call for *contra* support, "From Left to Right," ran in the January 1987 issue of *Commentary*, with a warm welcome from the editor. Ten months later Horowitz and Collier were so well established that they embarked on a mission to Nicaragua at the behest of Elliott Abrams's State Department office. They tell of their trip in their last chapter. It happens that I was in Managua at the same time, for the *Village Voice*. I recognize them perfectly from their description. They were the very image, upside-down, of an idiot-leftist delegation to the revolutionary utopia.

The tourists of the counter-revolution run into tourists of the revolution, whom they despise. They visit the Sandinista human rights specialist, the notorious Sister Mary Hartman, who tells them that Sandinista Nicaragua has no political prisoners at all. They correctly detect nonsense and move to refute it by citing Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, the co-director of *La Prensa*. She says, rather shockingly, that the Sandinistas may have had a role in the murder of her husband, Pedro—instead of the murder being the work of one of Somoza's cronies, as everyone has believed. " 'Back in the old days,' she continues, 'Somoza would lose patience with someone like Pedro and throw him in a brutal cell for a while, and then let him go. When they arrest someone today, they have the East German specialists'—here she made the gesture of someone shooting a syringe—'giving *las inyecciones*. We have now scientific *Somocismo*.' " Next the authors find a woman who, herself a political prisoner of the Sandinistas, describes *la chiquita*, the terrible tiny cell that—but this is the authors' interjection—"the Cubans had introduced to Nicaragua."

The claim that the Sandinistas murdered Pedro Joaquín Chamorro has become a popular rumor on the Nicaraguan right. But it is supported by no evidence that has come to light, nor does it make sense according to the ins-and-outs of Managua politics at the time of the killing. Nor does it correspond to what Mrs. Chamorro has said more recently, which reaffirmed the conventional assumption that blames Somoza's crony. Regarding Somoza's habit of jailing Pedro for "a while," obviously nobody told Collier and Horowitz that Pedro published two volumes of prison memoirs to describe the years, not the occasional "while," that he spent in Somoza's jails, where he suffered barbaric tortures, sometimes literally in sight of the American ambassador. Somebody might have told the authors also that penal injections were already a feature of Somoza's jails. They could have read about *la chiquita* in Pedro's prison memoirs, long before there were Cubans. *La chiquita* has figured in Nicaraguan history at least since the turn of the century, according to the father of Mrs. Chamorro's co-director at *La Prensa*, Pablo Antonio Cuadra.

Collier and Horowitz were in Nicaragua to meet oppositionists and to give them advice. They were there, in other words, to conduct precisely the sort of activity that, if done by American supporters of the Sandinistas, they would call treason. They were trying to shore up American policy, which was a large task indeed, since by the time of their arrival in October 1987 the policy was collapsing on all fronts. Iran-*contra* was at full boil in Washington, Oscar Arias's Esquipulas II peace plan was winning support from new countries every day, the Sandinistas were constrained to reopen *La Prensa*, and the prospects for the *contras* looked so grim that, even as the authors toured Managua, cease-fire zones for *contras* in the countryside were being established, a first step in what was going to be the retreat to Honduras.

The authors addressed a Social Christian youth group. They tell us that they advised the young people to be trickier and bolder in their political tactics—moronic advice, given the power of the Sandinista state security police. But *Destructive Generation* does not report on Horowitz's speech to the Social Christian adults, 60 of them. At that meeting, he informed the Social Christians that the *contras* were *winning*.

A good deal could be said about such a speech. The U.S. government has trampled on the cause of democracy in Nicaragua a thousand ways, not least by filling the credulous anti-Sandinista parties with bad advice and false information. In the case of Horowitz's deception about the *contras*, the purpose was to delude one of the main opposition parties about the actual status of an American policy that had suffered so much damage that speakers like Horowitz himself were the best that our State Department could find. The Social Christians of Nicaragua are a party of persecuted and humiliated right-wingers. Many of them are people who, in the ferocious atmosphere of Nicaraguan politics, have spent years on the verge of throwing over their civilian work and running to the mountains with a gun. They are without access to unbiased information. When the American government sends speakers, they listen.

So it is very striking. The same person who, in his career as leftist, got his bookkeeper to risk her life among people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Featuring articles by:

Michael Harrington
Daniel Bell
Ann Snitow
Michael Walzer
Irving Howe
Robert Kuttner

Lewis Coser
Richard Rorty
Joanne Barkan
Dennis Wrong
Janos Kis
Jürgen Habermas
Sean Wilentz
. . . and others!

AND GOING STRONG!

With our Spring 1989 issue, **Dissent** reaches its 35th Anniversary as the voice of the American democratic left.

We're publishing a special 160-page issue, chockful of thoughtful and informative articles defending liberal-left ideas, looking into new social problems, challenging conservative shibboleths, and upsetting some of our own premises. **Dissent** is the home of criticism and candor, untied to any party line.

Edited by Irving Howe & Michael Walzer, **Dissent** has championed liberal values and social change, fought against all variants of dictatorship, struggled with the perplexing problems of a changing world.

Buoyed by many new and younger writers, we are combative and inquisitive. You'll find **Dissent** a stimulant to thought and action.

You can get the current issue—or better yet, subscribe for a year—by filling out the order form below. (No billing.)

Available at bookstores and newsstands.

dissent
521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Dissent 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017

☐ I enclose $_____ for _____ cop(ies) of the Spring 1989 35th Anniversary issue at $5.00 per copy.

☐ I enclose $_____ for a year's subscription beginning with the Spring 1989 issue. (Domestic: $18; students: $15. Please request foreign and institutional rates.)

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____ Zip_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whom he surely knew to be murderers was, in his career as a rightist, giving a speech not unlikely to convince the oppressed oppositionists of Managua to risk their own lives among *contras* whom he knew to be losing a war. Some things don't change. The thrill of death is one of them, the existential kick, the riskiness—especially the thrill felt by bookish men who sometimes stored Panther weapons but would never (as their book acknowledges) think of firing a shot themselves, who might publish in a magazine like *Soldier of Fortune*, which is designed to prey on the vulnerabilities of hard-luck American ex-servicemen, but would never go themselves to fight in a war.

Collier and Horowitz have solved the problem that has proved so painful to all other important autobiographers of the New Left. For the story of New Leftists making their second conversion is always the story of a letdown. To give up the risky life, to set up camp elsewhere than on the razor's edge, to declare oneself a mainstream politician like Hayden or an academic of the moderate left like Gitlin: that is not like living and breathing for the revolution. It is better to be sane than to be crazy, but not necessarily in every respect. The sense of loss accounts for what Collier and Horowitz hate most about the memoirs by Hayden and Gitlin—their elegiac tone. *Destructive Generation* has no elegiac tone. Collier and Horowitz have surrendered nothing. The bracing air of combat has never ceased to fill their lungs. They are always at the microphone, their voices are always risen. They are always exhorting, "by any means necessary." And in the basement, literally or figuratively, for Huey P. Newton or Enrique Bermúdez, there are always guns.

PAUL BERMAN writes for the *Village Voice*.

Seeing And Believing

BY MARY JO SALTER

Collected Works by Flannery O'Connor edited by Sally Fitzgerald

(Library of America, 1,281 pp., $30)

"When I look at stories I have written," Flannery O'Connor remarked in an essay, "I find that they are, for the most part, about people who are poor, who are afflicted in both mind and body, who have little—or at best a distorted—sense of spiritual purpose, and whose actions do not apparently give the reader a great assurance of the joy of life." Now that the Library of America has published in one volume her *Collected Works*—the stories, the two novels, the essays, and selected letters—few readers will be unwise enough to take the undeniable accuracy of O'Connor's self-assessment at face value. She was offering no apology. Indeed, as she wrote a friend, "You will observe that I admire my own work as much if not more than anybody else does," and of her first novel, *Wise Blood*, she could even unabashedly announce that "I think everything in the book is right and I am astounded by it."

O'Connor defended herself with the very terms her critics might use to chastise her because she was confident not only of her craftsmanship but also—even more fiercely—of the vision of the world that her Catholic faith provided. "At some point in my life I realized that not only was I a Catholic but that this was all I was," she wrote in another letter, ". . . like someone else would be an atheist." (Few atheists feel that this is "all" they are, but O'Connor's thinking so only underscores how thoroughly Catholic she was.) She continued, "If my stories are complete it is because I see everything as beginning with original sin, taking in the Redemption, and reckoning on a final judgment."

Perhaps because her vision was so relentlessly absolute, her art turned on the axis of paradox—for paradox cannot exist without a sense of a standard, a sense of the expected. O'Connor's central paradox is probably the wisdom of the blind—an image she owes at least partly to Robert Fitzgerald, who was translating *Oedipus Rex* during the brief time she was living with him and his wife, Sally, and completing *Wise Blood*. As Sally Fitzgerald, the editor of this volume, notes in a telegraphic but illuminating chronology (which some readers will want to peruse first), O'Connor had already begun the novel but "decides on resolution . . . after reading" Sophocles' work. The resolution, no reader will forget, is that the atheist Hazel Motes (whose given name implies eye color, and whose nickname, "Haze," and surname both imply the initial obscurity of his vision) throws lye in his eyes and becomes a warped sort of saint.

O'Connor's casual remark in a letter to Ben Griffith that "I did a lot of thinking about Oedipus" belies how enduringly eyesight and blindness haunted her for her entire career. In a lecture years later, O'Connor reminded her listeners that "we will not see clearly until Christ touches us in death. . . ." While that moment awaits them, O'Connor's characters are offered partial insights and blindnesses. A few are even given eyes that don't quite match—like the priest in "The Enduring Chill," or Singleton in "The Partridge Festival" (here, thankfully, published in book form for the first time), or Julian's mother in "Everything That Rises Must Converge," whose stroke gives her one "unmoored" eye and another that "remained fixed on him, raked his face again, found nothing and closed."

The phrase "found nothing" is characteristically instructive: the point is not that she sees nothing, but that Julian, who prides himself on his psychological discernment, has a heartless core that the blinded woman has exposed. Only after he is found wanting can he accept the humbling claims of "the world of guilt and sorrow." The concluding words of *Wise Blood* offer Hazel Motes's landlady a similarly mixed solace, as she begins to see that she doesn't see: "She sat staring with her eyes shut, into his eyes, and felt as if she had finally got to the beginning of something she couldn't begin, and she saw him moving farther and farther away, farther and farther into the darkness until he was the pinpoint of light." But if blindness is the advent of wisdom, O'Connor gives the Devil his due as well: in "The Lame Shall Enter First," he is "the clear-eyed Devil, the sounder of hearts."

The Bible brims, of course, with paradox, upon which O'Connor habitually drew—as in "The Lame Shall Enter First," in which a well-meaning atheist neglects his son while attempting, in a secular, deluded way, to "save" a lame juvenile delinquent who is both devout and deliberately evil. By the time she wrote the story, O'Connor herself was crippled by the disseminated lupus erythematosus that would eventually kill her. But her title was certainly not meant to boast of herself as Heaven-bound; rather, she drew attention to the presence in the world of the unlikely and the inexplicable, to what she often called

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mystery. Deep as her admiration of herself as a writer ran, her fiction can be read as a continual chastisement of her own soul, as a warning from one mismatched eye to the other, the one called Faith cautioning the one called Intellect not to assume it sees everything.

This young woman who was one of the finest thinkers among American Catholic fiction writers—who in college read the *Summa Theologica* for 20 minutes before bed every night and who later recommended books like *The History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* to her friends—relished the punishing of intellectuals. Among her victims is Hulga of "Good Country People," a Ph.D. in philosophy, who condescends to the innocent Bible salesman she hopes to seduce and corrupt until he (no innocent, and the true seducer) steals her artificial leg. A number of would-be writers get punished, too—like Julian of "Everything That Rises Must Converge," or Asbury of "The Enduring Chill," who seeks to prove his love of Negroes by drinking unpasteurized milk with them, and then falls ill with something he hopes is ennobling and fatal but is only "the same as Bang's [disease] in a cow." Or Calhoun of "The Partridge Festival," who romanticizes a killer as a Christ figure (and as fodder for a novel) until he visits the man in prison and discovers the most unspiritual of madmen, a sexual exhibitionist.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

O'Connor's punishment of the intellectual is akin to, though not exactly the same as, a principle that she explained to the anonymous friend who is known to us only as "A": "It has always seemed necessary to me to throw the weight of circumstance against the character I favor. The friends of God suffer, etc. The priest is right, therefore he can carry the burden of a certain social stupidity." Priests are obviously right, in O'Connor's world; but it is often no easy matter to see whom among her misguided and unsavory characters she "favors."

In neither of her novels do the friends of God know that they are His friend. Hazel Motes of *Wise Blood*, founder of the Church Without Christ, is, as O'Connor describes him in a note to the second edition, "a Christian *malgré lui*," who cannot "get rid of the ragged figure who moves from tree to tree in the back of his mind." And in the even more complex *The Violent Bear It Away*, both protagonists, in their antagonistic ways, attempt to deny the grace of God that they sense has touched them. Rayber, the atheist schoolteacher who refuses to allow his idiot son (named, in a typical O'Connor touch, Bishop) to be baptized, and his young nephew Tarwater, who begins to fulfill his unwished-for destiny as a prophet only after he takes Bishop out in a boat and drowns him, are locked in a battle in which only the most percipient reader will know whom to root for. The irony-upon-irony of Tarwater's deranged but partly God-driven act is reflected in a bizarre apology: "I baptized him. . . . It was an accident. I didn't mean to. . . . I only meant to drown him."

It was like O'Connor to allow a favored character his baptism only at the moment of his violent death. In her most famous, and I think her greatest, story, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," she allows her central character, the garrulous grandmother, exactly one profound thought in her life (though it is technically inaccurate): "Why," she says to The Misfit, who has just had everyone in her family slaughtered, "you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children!" Long dismissed as foolish by her only son, Bailey, and his family, the grandmother senses that she, too, has been a misfit.

At a simple and secular level, she loves The Misfit because she has discovered their common loneliness. But The Misfit has been perversely endowed with a greater religious sense than she; indeed, he sees the world-shaking importance of Jesus' intervention in human history, and that one's central choice in life is to follow Him or to pay the hellish price. When the grandmother offers to share with The Misfit the intimation of divine love that she has herself been mysteriously offered, but cannot identify, he identifies it at once. Fearing love more than anything, he springs back "as if a snake had bitten him" and pulls the trigger. What follows this merciless, unthinkable murder is—just as in Tarwater's case—an inspired incongruous remark: " 'She would of been a good woman,' The Misfit said, 'if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life.' " And in a way he is right. The violent bear away the best, the profoundest, the funniest lines—and at the most tragic moments.

O'Connor was terribly funny; her comic sense is virtually peerless among modern American writers. It resembles the dark humor of Evelyn Waugh, that English Roman Catholic who, like her, took great pleasure in meting out injustice after injustice to his characters—a pleasure that might even be called wicked. Even in her last, perhaps least successful mature story, "Parker's Back," composed as she was dying (O'Connor confided to a friend, "I did well to write it at all"), her wit remained thoroughly unsentimental, as in this glimpse into Parker's marriage: "She was pregnant and pregnant women were not his favorite kind. Nevertheless, he stayed as if she had him conjured. He was puzzled and ashamed of himself." The temptation to find some link be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tween this hard-hearted humor common to O'Connor and Waugh, and the Catholicism they shared, is a risky one—especially since humor itself is inborn and unteachable. (They would have said, God-given.) But isn't there something in the notion that the more merciless the author, the more he or she may reveal our dependence on the (not always evident) mercy of the first Author?

Even if her serious concerns had been entirely different, O'Connor would have made us laugh in pleasure at her ear for speech alone. To create a Southern dialect that even the Northern reader feels he is hearing unerringly, she uses remarkably few repeated tricks, such as "oncet" for once and "hit" for it and "it" for there (as in The Misfit's famous concluding line, "It's no real pleasure in life"). Often by re-spelling a word or two exactly as she hears them, she conveys the tone of an entire speech, as in this passage from "The Artificial Nigger": " 'You were the one holding the sack,' Nelson said. 'I would have kepaholt of it.' " We can hear even Jesus' Southern accent in "Revelation," in which Mrs. Turpin, who turns thankfulness for her blessings into a particularly ugly brand of pride, imagines some almost unbearable conversations with her Savior:

> If Jesus had said, "You can be high society and have all the money you want and be thin and svelte-like, but you can't be a good woman with it," she would have had to say, "Well don't make me that then. Make me a good woman and it don't matter what else, how fat or how ugly or how poor!"

O'Connor's brilliance with dialogue encompasses an inspired sense of when to paraphrase it. This is perhaps one of her most distinctive gifts. Who can forget, in "A Good Man Is Hard to Find," the social commentary offered by the grandmother and the owner of a roadside restaurant: "The old lady said that in her opinion Europe was entirely to blame for the way things were now. She said the way Europe acted you would think we were made of money and Red Sam said it was no use talking about it, she was exactly right." By appropriating nearly verbatim these painfully benighted remarks into her own "space," that place of summaries and overviews reserved for the narrator, O'Connor both makes them more preposterous and appears not to notice their ignorance.

Similarly, in "The Displaced Person," in which a Polish worker and his family arrive at Mrs. McIntyre's farm and begin to set its little community on its head, with ultimately fatal results, O'Connor invites the language of the dairyman's wife, Mrs. Shortley, to dominate the narration:

> The priest had told Mrs. McIntyre his name was Rudolph and he was twelve and the girl's name was Sledgewig and she was nine. Sledgewig sounded to Mrs. Shortley like something you would name a bug, or vice versa, as if you named a boy Bollweevil. All of them's last name was something

Revisiting Bonnard: The Nudes

I *Effet de glace*

At first her body reigned over canvas,
leaving the room to find what light it could
diffusing from her brilliant skin.
He draped her better than any god,
retouched the slant of certain shadows,
emphasized her breasts until he was moved
by their fullness, the generosity
of light giving way, inviting the couch,
the sheets to undulate with hair,
a black cataract down the mirror.
He blessed her thighs, the wide expanse,
until he felt her skin, a stream of blue,
curving round a velvet chair. He dropped
her hand, the other glazed across her neck
to reach a place no one could find
behind a tapestry as rich, as remote
as the source of light beneath her skin:
always beautiful, always a lie.

II The Bath

He began to paint in bathrooms,
the air filled with prisms of brass,
the sunlight abstracting the obvious.
Mirrors attracted him, shattering skin
she soaped for eternities, legs crossed,
oil running down her iridescent arms.
A ceramic shell held her suspended
while he fell in love with tiles, lapis
and yellow tiles—that gentle blur. He asked
if she would mind—each stroke applied
would quiet her frantic heart, soften
the jutting chin, a compliment of sorts
this accumulating color, the sensate world
of imperfection. She scrubbed her skin,
scraped layers away, while he multiplied
with his brush the undying, luring shades.

III Musée du Petit Palais, Paris

The reunion after many months occurs
with Vuillard distracting the guard
wary of visitors standing and staring:
What is he doing, your friend? With rags?
And a brush? So surprising in the dark.
So silenced. So stark. So dark. Bonnard's hands
reaching beyond the balustrade to restore
the vision, the subtle and violent variation
she said she wanted.

IV Saint-Tropez (*Nu à la Baignoire*)

His mind remains inside the sea
he has made for her to swim in,
a sea of color, elaborate light.
His bending arm, a broken palm
that lifts the waves round her head:
her fingers fall beneath the lure
of cobalt, a depth she fears to know.
Still, he has made the tub float out
of the room (her extended leg
a mantled prow) on blue and yellow tiles
that shimmer like any summer day,
an afternoon for her to dream in
where nothing will be asked of her.
When she is tired, he will come again,
touching up the gold beneath her chin.

Linda Nowlin

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that only they themselves and the priest could pronounce. All she could make out of it was Gobblehook.

This feat of writing as Mrs. Shortley would (if she could) write, so that the narrator is herself a "displaced person," is all the more remarkable for the way it merges seamlessly with sentences about Mrs. Shortley that boast a vocabulary and a delicacy that can only be O'Connor's: "About fifteen feet from the gesticulating group," we read on the next page, "she stopped and made her presence felt by training her gaze on the back of Mrs. McIntyre's neck." Such tonal distance (much like the distance O'Connor observes in her merciless plotting) might, one would think, work only in an author who didn't slum around with the likes of Mrs. Shortley. "The omniscient narrator is not properly supposed to use colloquial expressions," O'Connor admitted, not very apologetically, in a letter. "I send a good many of my things to Caroline Gordon (Tate) for her criticism and she is always writing me that I mustn't say such things, that the om. nar. never speaks like anyone but Dr. Johnson. Of course, it is a great strain for me to speak like Dr. Johnson." The truth is that she could speak very like Dr. Johnson when she needed to. What O'Connor had learned—from Gordon, and on her own—was never to share her characters' language wholly, but instead to absorb bits and pieces of it, whose spacing, and pacing, had to be perfectly handled in order to work at all.

O'Connor's literary education began late (when she arrived at the Iowa Writer's Workshop in 1945, with an undergraduate degree from the Georgia State College for Women, she had never even heard of Faulkner or Kafka or Joyce) and ended too early, with her death at the age of 39. But she managed to acquire a command of an impressive number of writers. In a folksy, "who, me?" manner—usually delightful, sometimes a touch irritating—she admitted to their influences: not just the fantasists Hawthorne and Poe, whom one might expect, but hypersensitive narrators such as Henry James. "I read Henry James, thinking this may affect my writing for the better without my knowing how," she wrote to one correspondent, echoing a letter to another friend: "I don't have one perception about the novels, but I keep reading them hoping they'll affect my writing without my being bothered knowing how." Only this time she was talking about Conrad. When, as happens here, phrases reappear, the seeming offhandedness of her epistolary style betrays itself as one more deliberately learned tone. And yet one remembers "without my being *bothered* knowing how": O'Connor held onto her instincts, afraid they would escape her, even as she grasped after formal mastery. She approached her craft as she did her religion: faith came before intellect.

But how do *we* approach her religion? Twenty-five years after her death, the world is even more removed from Catholic orthodoxy than she sadly found it. People were often reading O'Connor disastrously wrong, and her essays and many of her letters are largely, sometimes repetitively, directed toward setting them on the right path. One can think of few major writers of our time who have felt, justifiably, so pressing a need to play the roles of both creator and self-explicator. O'Connor often thought she had compelled herself to be painfully obvious. Yet readers are apt to feel that, for all her help, themes and details go undetected. Only on reading the stories and letters together did I realize, for instance, that the Thomas of "The Comforts of Home," who goes to violent ends to dislodge from his house a "nimpermaniac" (his mother's indulgent word), is in part a homage to the St. Thomas who (as O'Connor wrote to "A") ran a prostitute out of his own home "with a red-hot poker."

Still, if O'Connor's turn of mind and allusions are unexpected or obscure, reading her collected works straight through is a decreasingly shocking experience. By page 501, a first-time reader of the story "Greenleaf," which opens with a bull idly chewing Mrs. May's hedge, may well say to himself, Oh yes, that bull is going to gore her. And so, in a brutally effective penultimate paragraph, the bull does. The surprises in O'Connor's work reside, in the end, not in events themselves, but in what is artistically and religiously made of them. When Mrs. May is gored, she has "the look of a person whose sight has suddenly been restored but who finds the light unbearable."

In a secular age, the religious element in her work is often bound to be seen as symbolic, however fervently O'Connor wanted to be read literally. Once, when someone at a dinner party remarked that the Trinity was a "pretty good" symbol, O'Connor recounted in a letter, she could only reply "in a very shaky voice, 'Well, if it's a symbol, to hell with it.' " (For her, she wrote, the Trinity was "the center of existence . . . all the rest of life is expendable.") Knowing her literalism, it is hard not to feel O'Connor's impatience with her readers, most of us wrongheaded, when she refers to a character like Thomas for whom the Devil is "only a manner of speaking." But if

Call for any book

- Immediate shipment worldwide.
- Credit cards or check.
- Ask about our overnight gift delivery nationwide.
- Free monthly New Title Forecast.
- Mail orders welcome.
- Open 24 hours every day.

BOOK CALL

1-800-255-2665
In CT or Worldwide (203) 966-5470
59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840

INTENSITIES & ANALOGIES
by A.R. Thurar
The psychological reasons for everyday behaviors: Art, Drama, Love, Music, Religion, Sex, Sports & many others.
ECR Press, P.O. Box 1208, Stn. B, Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1P 5R3. $8 + $2 s/h (chq. or m.o.)

Between Bailout and Breakdown
A Modular Approach to Latin America's Debt Crisis
William Guttman $ 6.95
"...provides as good an inventory of realistic and pragmatic proposals... as exists."
Alan Stoga, Senior Associate, Kissinger Associates
CSIS BOOKS
1800 K Street, N.W. Ste. 400
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 775-3119

THE FIRST Amendment protects even the Pope. A judge ruled that Catholic University was within its rights in stripping Father Charles Curran, the Hefnerite moral theologian, of his tenure. Curran says it leaves him "saddened." Why? John Paul II and likeminded people get to keep control of their church. Father Curran remains free to start one of his own.

For an introductory 15-issue subscription to NATIONAL REVIEW for just $17.95, call 800-222-6806.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many of us can't share O'Connor's faith (although perhaps we would envy her for it), we may take comfort, just like her wickedest characters, in the next best thing—our own probable damnation. I think O'Connor makes us follow her a long way, as the best devout writers always have. She makes us believe that the stakes for believing or not believing are high.

And she does so nearly as well in her letters as in her fiction. Indeed, some readers will continue to value O'Connor most for her correspondence. (There are some new letters here, many familiar ones are unabridged, and Sally Fitzgerald offers helpful notes in the back, though these are a little too unobtrusive: I miss the running commentary of biographical detail that she inserted with such tact in the first compendium of O'Connor's letters, *The Habit of Being*, published a decade ago.) O'Connor's letters to "A" before her friend's conversion—as well as the deflated, wry but respectful letters that follow "A" 's apostasy—are models of the intricacies of faith. In one typical letter that, with its repeated emphasis on what "I" rather than "you" believe, and with its offbeat logic, rises above sermonizing, she explains:

> I don't assume that renunciation goes with submission, or even that renunciation is good in itself. Always you renounce a lesser good for a greater; the opposite is what sin is. And along this line, I think the phrase "naive purity" is a contradiction in terms. I don't think purity is mere innocence; I don't think idiots and babies possess it. I take it to be something that comes either with experience or with Grace . . .

O'Connor could be plain as a children's primer, too: "I am looking for an agent," she begins simply and forcefully in writing Elizabeth McKee at the age of 23, as if there is no question that she would get one. With the Fitzgeralds and her writer friend Maryat Lee she adopted another voice altogether, gay and ironic and self-deprecating. Often she delighted in creating an O'Connor character of herself, full of ignorance and goodwill. Congratulating Sally Fitzgerald on a pregnancy, for instance, she counsels: "I reccoment [sic] turnip green potliquor with cornbread broke up in it."

She is most admirable, perhaps, when she poses like this, for the reader inevitably measures her high spirits against the circumstances of her mature writing life. Living in Milledgeville, Georgia—a town without a bookstore—with the peafowl she raised as a hobby and with her devoted but wholly unliterary mother, she suffered increasingly from a disease that, having killed her father, must have filled her with dread. Although she often alluded to her low energy, enough for only a few hours' work each morning, she did so without self-pity. She must have had more strength than she claimed, for she read omnivorously and wrote stacks of letters. Explicit references to the lupus are astonishingly few, and some of them even show gratitude for the ways it served her. It helped her to create and to empathize with her physically deformed characters, of course, but more practically, as she wrote to Caroline Gordon, "I walk like I have one foot in the gutter but it's not an inconvenience and I get out of doing a great many things I don't want to do." Unencumbered by domestic duties, and blessed with (barely) enough money that she took no job apart from occasional lecturing, she enjoyed briefly, for all the tragic circumscription of her life, a freedom few writers, especially women writers, experience.

It could be argued that the limits of O'Connor's daily life, even more than the "limits" of her Catholicism, confined the range of her fiction. She wrote of the flawed and thwarted love between parents and children, but she never once took romantic love as her principal subject; men and women co-habit, more or less well, in marriages and liaisons that begin somewhere off the page. Yet this lack surely has little to do with the apparent paucity of romance in O'Connor's own life. For here was a woman whose imagination needed little experience to verify its findings, whose male protagonists take up far more pages than females do, and whose most fully realized character is probably that mass murderer The Misfit. Perhaps romantic love didn't interest O'Connor very much; what concerned her most was the progress of love between man and his Maker. Since we have plenty of writers to cover romantic love, we can grant O'Connor her subject, and thank her (or God) for the scope of it.

MARY JO SALTER'S *Unfinished Painting*, just published by Knopf, is the Lamont Poetry Selection of the Academy of American Poets for 1988.

Mr. Myth

BY VERLYN KLINKENBORG

The Lyre of Orpheus by Robertson Davies

(Viking, 472 pp., $19.95)

What's Bred in the Bone is Robertson Davies's novel about a modern Canadian artist named Francis Cornish who fails by succeeding. He conquers the technical demands of his art, finds his one true subject, and paints a masterpiece from the wrong era, a portrait of his soul's history in the conventions of the late Renaissance. The faces in his painting, *The Marriage at Cana*, are contemporary, their setting and disposition antique, and the contradiction destroys Cornish as an artist. It also destroys at least one critic who believes *The Marriage* to be a genuine period work. Rarely has there been such a sympathetic portrayal of artistic atavism. Perhaps that is because in Francis Cornish, Robertson Davies sees himself.

What's Bred in the Bone is the finest and least typical of Davies's many novels, not quite his own *Marriage at Cana*, though the analogy is tempting. Davies, too, is at ease in an old-fashioned mode. "Art" and "soul," like "God" and "Devil," are words he shuffles with a magician's aplomb. His characters openly mourn the passing of a world framed by Heaven and Hell—not the latitudinarian states of psychological bliss or depression, but the real pitch-burning, harp-plucking destinations. Davies's universe resembles a large canvas tent with stars painted on the ceiling. A fire burns within and an old man with a long white beard sits beside it telling a fabulous tale full of astrology, bear-worship, strange sex, apparitions from a dozen minor faiths and graveyards, and downright philosophical bunkum, much of it camouflaged as erudition. The tent is easily struck and moved to a new location, the tale easily told with new characters, but it is always the same tent and always the same tale.

Davies writes trilogies, three to date, the last two of which, the Deptford and Cornish trilogies, have earned him a cultlike fame in the United States. Each novel carries a kind of surgeon general's warning that this is a self-standing work enjoyable on its own. But that is not why one reads trilogies, nor, presumably, why they get written: they exist to satisfy an abject narrative hunger in us. *What's Bred in the Bone* invites readerly wallowing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

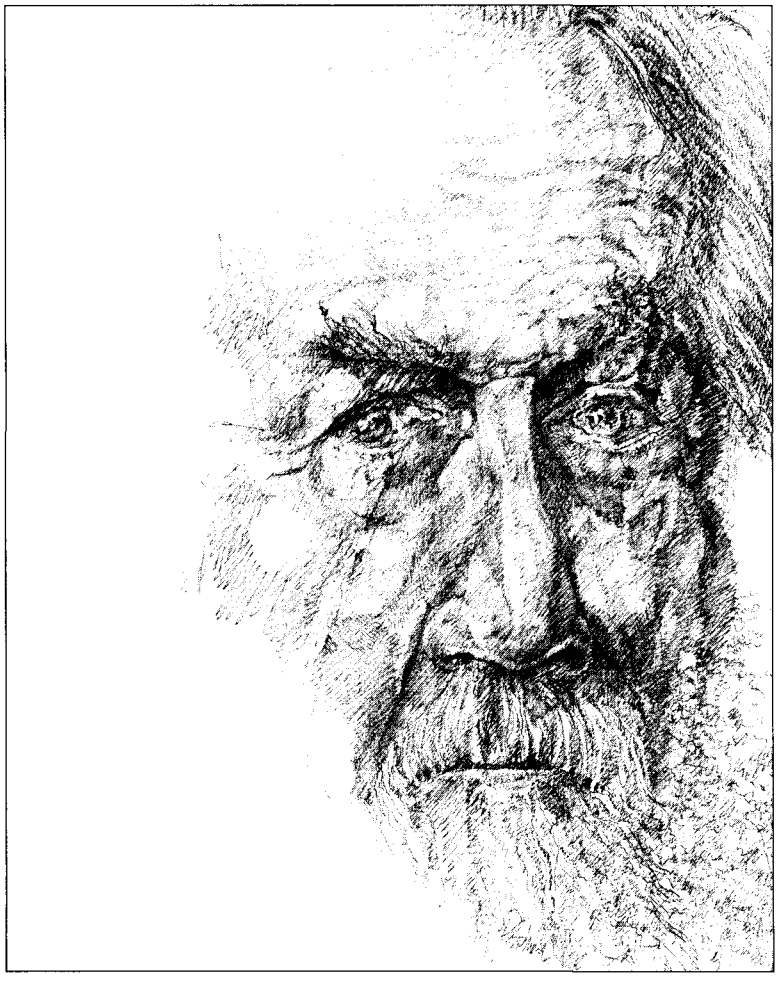
of the most pleasurable sort: exactly the thing one expects from a trilogy. Unlike Davies's other novels, it is a wholly conventional work, a past-tense, omniscient witnessing of the growth and maturity of Francis Cornish. All of its formal elements are borrowed—Samuel Butler would smile wanly at this novel—but their vitality is distinctive. The awakening of an aesthetic soul in a constricting world, the relationship between student and teacher, the disillusionment of a foolish lover, the isolation of an old man—there is nothing new in any of this. Yet Davies gives it freshness, and in this work alone he finds compassion. Cornish is a character we are compelled to believe in and feel for. He has the same trouble with time that many thinking persons do.

One looks in vain for such authorial grace elsewhere in Davies's books. The other two novels of the Cornish trilogy, *The Rebel Angels* and his most recent, *The Lyre of Orpheus*—as well as the whole of the Deptford trilogy—feature the archaic marvels of the bearded old man in the tent. It is all supposed to add up to wonder, which is not a simple effect to produce. Davies should know, for one of his most important characters, Magnus Eisengrim, is an apostle of wonder.

Eisengrim dominates the Deptford trilogy, *Fifth Business*, *The Manticore*, and *World of Wonders*. Like Dunstan Ramsay and Boy Staunton, also major characters in that trilogy, Eisengrim comes from a small Canadian town called Deptford. Born Paul Dempster, the son of a preacher and a saintly madwoman, he has the bearing of a supercilious duke. But while Ramsay and Staunton leave home in orderly fashion, Eisengrim is kidnapped by a pederastic magician from a shabby carnival and deprived of everything but time and the opportunity to become a brilliant illusionist. Their tales eventually intertwine. Staunton, a sugar baron, dies with a stone in his mouth shortly after meeting Eisengrim for the first time since they were boys. Ramsay, a schoolmaster and historian of saints, writes Eisengrim's sensational stage biography. Staunton's son, pursuing the spiritual health his father destroyed, eventually makes his way to the magician's redoubt, a castle named Sorgenfrei owned by Leisl Vitzlipützli, the sexually ambiguous, spiritually edifying ogress, who manages Eisengrim's career, sleeps with Ramsay, and pushes David Staunton toward salvation.

As even a bare summary of the Deptford plots reveals, these are romances, not novels. In his wanderings, Eisengrim joins the London theatrical company of Sir John Tresize, an authority on romance and a thespian relic who carted melodrama of the most creaking sort into the 20th century. As several of Davies's characters do, Tresize defends his vulgar art by appealing to the unsophisticated needs of the mass of humanity. "Romance," Eisengrim says, quoting Tresize, "is a mode of feeling that puts enormous emphasis . . . on individual experience. Tragedy puts something above humanity: so does Comedy; Romance puts humanity first."

Eisengrim's sympathies, true to the bitterness of his young life, incline toward a harsher vision of romance. An illusionist, his trade is wonder, which is also the yield of traditional romance—of *The Winter's Tale*, for instance. "Wonder is marvellous," says Leisl Vitzlipützli, "but it is also cruel, cruel, cruel." Romance of Eisengrim's sort rises on a scaffold of sordid details and the willing abasement of the spectator; his philosophy of art requires the combustion that occurs when a paying rube meets a trickster. (The image of the rube is important to Davies; it reappears in the Cornish trilogy as the Romany word *gadjo*, "a simpleton to be cheated by the knowing ones.") Like tragedy and comedy, Eisengrim's version of romance puts something above humanity, too: the artist, who is both priest and disciplinarian. Viewing *The Winter's Tale*, one is glad to be a spectator and not the real victim of romance's emotional cruelty; watching behind the scenes as Eisengrim prepares his work of deception, one is barely glad to be a spectator.



DRAWING BY DAVID SCHORR FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Davies gives his plots what modernity they have by couching them in semi-confessional form—Ramsay writing to the head of his old school, David Staunton undergoing Jungian therapy, Eisengrim providing a "subtext" from his own life for a Scandinavian film, the journal entries of *The Rebel Angels*. But this veneer parts again and again, and beneath it we can see that Davies pretends to philosophy. The wildness inherent in romance is traditionally given shape by familiar patterns of myth; they guide the chaos of incident into meaning. Behind his modern dress actors, and not very far behind them at that, Davies mans a cumbersome mythic machine. "Mythical elements," Ramsay teaches his students, "underlie our apparently ordinary lives." Plot, as Davies might put it, is merely the handmaid of the lord.

In the Cornish trilogy, Davies's use of myth, his belief—never subtle—that it is the means shaping our ends, grows steadily more obvious and confining, until the mythic noose has tightened and the actors are choking. The Deptford trilogy was bad enough. Metamorphoses were dealt out freely there, to Ramsay and Staunton, to Eisengrim, who goes from Paul Dempster to Cass Fletcher to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fetch Mungo ("fetch" being a shadow or double) to Eisengrim (the great wolf from the legend of Reynard the Fox). Leisl Vitzlipützli rechristens herself from *Faust*, after the least of the demons attending the magician, while her castle, Sorgenfrei, is simply a spot free from care. This is not myth, it is a straining after the resonance of myth.

The same effects are produced in the Cornish trilogy, but on a more confined stage. Set largely in the Canadian College of St. John and the Holy Ghost (called Spook), *The Rebel Angels* and *The Lyre of Orpheus* feel like academic murder mysteries in which the author was so long on learned detail that he forgot the killing. Indeed, there are killings and suicides, but alas, no mystery. In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, characters from *The Rebel Angels* are joined by a small group of predictably eccentric musicians and actors like Hulda Schnackenburg, an enfant terrible, and Dr. Gunilla Dahl-Soot, a lesbian Swede. The Cornish Foundation, erected on the fortune the painter left behind, has decided to sponsor the completion and production of E. T. A. Hoffmann's unfinished opera, *Arthur of Britain, or The Magnanimous Cuckold*.

Thus the scene is set for the rare novel about arts administration. *The Lyre of Orpheus* represents the unrestrained dominance of Davies's mythic designs. It aspires to be an Arthurian roman à clef in which the adulterous triangle of Arthur, Guenevere, and Lancelot is refashioned, willfully, in the lives of Arthur Cornish, the painter's nephew; his wife, Maria Magdalena Theotoky, a half-gypsy doctoral candidate with an allegorical sandwich board for a name; and Geraint Powell, a Welsh actor who slips into Maria's bed after Arthur is unmanned by the mumps. Meanwhile Hoffmann utters asides from the grave.

This must have sounded clever in contemplation, especially given the opportunity it provides for philological preening. In execution, however, the characters are smothered by the novel's conceit. Mythic parallels, so carefully elaborated at the start of the novel, bring no weight to the narrative. A great pother is made about Maria's adulterous betrayal of Arthur, but it fades without any consequence, aside from a shabby lesson in the need for magnanimity. Maria, a voice of some charm earlier in the trilogy, becomes a mere figurehead, a woman who cannot resolve the dispute between her gypsy blood and her rational mind and so chooses to be Guenevere and a fraud. The blithe chatter, meant to resemble warmth and the fiery play of intellect, never kindles. One would gladly swap the smug dialogue oozing from *The Lyre of Orpheus* for a few more scenes of youth's coming of age in sectarian Canada—scenes that lend so much life to *What's Bred in the Bone*.

Davies, the reader gratefully discovers, is not always mythic. Even he, at times, folds his tent, steps into the day, and actually looks at the way life has been lived. When he does, one longs for a trilogy of such stuff, the substance of the human condition itself. In *World of Wonders*, Sir John Tresize's troupe makes a final, triumphant tour of Canada, occasioning the clearest vision Davies gives us of his homeland—a place where from a train, one could almost be lulled into believing this was Russia, the very sap of whose trees is soulful. Sir John's archaic melodramas played well in the provinces because they spoke "to a core of loneliness and deprivation in these Canadians of which they were only faintly aware . . . [they] knew themselves to be strangers in their own land, without being at home anywhere else." That is the virtue for Davies of bygone, small-town Canada, a place where he is at his best. It was a land where culture was lost (not disappeared, but wandering) in the forests, lonely for an unknown home, a better emblem of the world into which the soul is born than any other he could invent.

VERLYN KLINKENBORG is the author of *Making Hay* (Vintage).

Time's Reason

BY CHARLES LARMORE

Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History by Ernest Gellner

(University of Chicago Press, 288 pp., $24.95)

History need not have a meaning in order to make sense. The idea that human history unfolds in accord with an inner logic, that it is itself an agent with an overarching purpose, was once a powerful element in Western culture. Today, for many different reasons, the grand historical visions of divine providence, absolute spirit, the class struggle, and the irresistible march toward Western values are no longer living thoughts. It is possible to recognize an overall order in the past, however, without assuming that history moves toward a goal. There are historical developments whose origins are utterly contingent, but whose consequences, though unforeseen, are so profound that they set the framework in which for centuries we live and think. History, like the market, displays patterns that are not the result of any design.

It is philosophic history of this more modest type that Ernest Gellner aims to practice. His book is a thoughtful and lively meditation upon probably the greatest transformation in human history, upon the difficult problems it poses and the scant resources it has left us to solve them. Society has gone through three stages: hunting-gathering, agrarian, and industrial. Gellner's thesis is that this development has involved a radical reorganization of the three fundamental activities of production, coercion, and cognition. Today we tend to believe that the efficient allocation of limited resources among competing ends, the affirmation and enforcement of norms by which to live, and the discovery and explanation of fact are largely distinct activities, with different goals. But this sharp division of labor has not always been in place.

To show this, Gellner takes on the stock enigma of anthropological theory, the interpretation of primitive beliefs. What should the anthropologist make of those outlandish statements with which primitive, pre-agrarian man seems so profligate: that bulls are cucumbers, that maternal uncles are parakeets? There have been two extremes of thought about this question. Some anthropologists have concluded that the primitive mind was "pre-rational," untutored in the simplest logical operations. But this view ran up against the fact that primitive man was also extraordinarily skilled in observing and altering his environment. So the second approach has been to deny that such statements were ever meant as descriptions of fact. Their terms were used symbolically instead, and their intent was the ritual affirmation of the social order.

Gellner is not satisfied by this solution, either. If the natives had meant simply to proclaim their loyalty to the norms of their society, why did they not say just that, instead of uttering what seem to be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

empirical statements about the world? The proper solution, he believes, lies in discarding the assumption common to both these approaches, namely, that primitive man shared our firm distinction between the description of fact and the affirmation of norms. Gellner proposes that primitive man saw his norms in the world and felt the world in his norms. Nature and culture were inextricable. Only intermittently was the primitive's talk about the world purely descriptive. And in general his beliefs hung together not through systematic doctrine, but through the calendar of social ritual.

The primitive worldview persisted through the Neolithic revolution into the agrarian age, in which food came to be produced (instead of found) and stored. Yet this new principle of delayed returns meant that the organization of agrarian society was more complex. There had to be a social division of labor in which a class of warrior-rulers, as well as a clerisy or intellectual class (usually a priesthood), was hived off from the bulk of agricultural workers. The invention of writing then allowed the clerisy to disengage the cultural tradition from ritual contexts, and to shape it into a coherent system. This was, in Gellner's terms, the high agrarian society of plough, sword, and book.

Gellner does not believe that we know just how the Neolithic revolution occurred, or why the clerisy was moved to exploit the systematizing capacities of writing. But the upshot of these developments is clear. The ritual lore of primitive man gave way to a new interest in logical coherence. The crucial point, Gellner claims, is that this push toward doctrinal unification in agrarian society was not the discovery of the modern concept of knowledge. Quite the contrary; cognition and coercion, the description of fact and the affirmation of norms, remained intertwined. The object of systematic doctrine—the God of the great religions or the Nature of Greek philosophy—served both to explain the course of the world and to issue the norms by which men ought to live.

Agrarian society, Gellner observes, had an inherent tendency toward stagnation. The economic surplus was at the mercy of a rapacious ruling class, which the producers could elude only by donating their profits to the clerisy. So without the reinvestment of surplus, productivity dragged. The clerisy itself was engaged in elaborating a worldview that, by its mix of normative and factual ambitions, fettered free inquiry. Only Europe was able to break out of this rut on its own. We still lack, Gellner says, an adequate explanation of the rise of modernity, and the proper explanation will never be of a simple, simple-factor kind.

But Gellner does believe that the cognitive dimension of the modern revolution turned crucially on the lucky confluence of two separate traditions. Refined methods of doctrinal systematization, plus the belief in an utterly transcendent God, emptied the natural world of any immanent norms, freeing it for a purely scientific treatment. Logic and a hidden, jealous God, Athens and Jerusalem, were both necessary for the description of fact and the affirmation of norms to draw apart at last. That is why Gellner, like Weber, sees the Reformation as the critical intellectual movement of modern times. It played an important role in the scientific revolution, and in the rise of capitalism as well, though he insists that a great many other political and social conditions were also required for the productive surplus to be turned back into the economy.

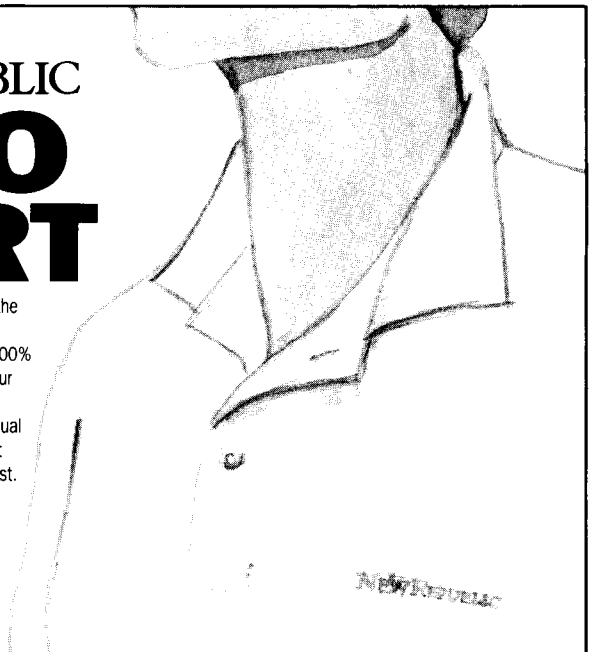
Only in modern times, therefore, have production, coercion, and cognition become largely autonomous. The benefits of this specialization have been indisputable, particularly for modern science. But there have also been important limits and costs, which are the subject of the second half of Gellner's book. The free market, for example, has become a thing of the past. No developed society, Gellner notes, can now afford not to place its economy under manifold forms of state control. Despite electoral slogans, controversy in this area centers only around the specifics of regulation. This re-politicization of the economy, along with the increasing satisfaction of material needs and the huge expansion of leisure time, makes the tasks of coercion, or normative integration, all the greater.

Precisely the normative domain, however, is where modern society, according to Gellner, is singularly ill-equipped. The firm distinction between empirical inquiry and the affirmation of norms has meant that we can no longer read off our values from the very structure of the cosmos. We must now find the source of our norms within ourselves. The conviction of the Enlightenment was that in us there is some fixed point, Reason or Sentiment, that can serve as the basis of our norms. Gellner believes that this is no longer a plausible view. The reasons and the desires on which we lean to justify the norms we affirm are not permanent or "natural." They are historically conditioned, shaped by a variable culture. The rise of modern science, and our heightened historical awareness, seem to have

THE NEW REPUBLIC

POLO SHIRT

The New Republic is proud to present the ultimate fashion statement: The New Republic polo shirt. Fashioned out of 100% cotton and custom embroidered with our attractive new logo, The New Republic polo will become the staple of your casual wardrobe. It also makes the perfect gift for TNR aficionados on your shopping list. The New Republic polo is available in crisp white with the logo embroidered in navy blue, in adult sizes, small, medium, large and extra large. Only $24.50 per shirt plus $1.25 per shirt for shipping. Satisfaction guaranteed! Order yours today.



To: THE NEW REPUBLIC POLO SHIRT OFFER, 1220 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

Please send me _____ polo shirt(s) in size(s) _____.

I have enclosed a check/money order in the amount of _____ to cover the cost of the shirt ($24.50 each) plus shipping ($1.25 each) plus applicable sales tax (D.C. Residents add 6%.) My address is:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sapped any rational basis for morality. Like Daniel Bell and Jürgen Habermas, Gellner believes that modern society is caught in a fundamentally normative crisis.

There are two ways out of this quandary that Gellner is probably right to deem unpromising. The first is to go on hoping to discover in man a universally valid foundation for morality, unsullied by historical circumstance. The second is to beat a retreat to earlier views, resuscitating premodern mixes of fact and norm, or to claim normative validity for one's own culture, just because this would be something nice to have. Gellner makes some cruelly accurate remarks about the "re-enchantment industry," to which so many intellectuals have lent their talents. He thinks that reason and morality will remain at odds for the foreseeable future. "The world we seriously *think* in and the world we *live* in, will remain distinct." And this dissociation is not merely an intellectual attitude. It also affects our ability to solve political and economic problems in a democratically acceptable way. For Gellner, the course of human history can be summarized in this one law: "Logical and social coherence are inversely related."

That we live in an age of moral crisis is undeniable. Yet it is not so clear that Gellner has arrived at its proper diagnosis. Instead of being poorly equipped to handle normative questions, modern thought may be blind to the moral resources actually at hand. Whether morality can be given a rational basis depends on what is meant by reason. When pessimistic about a rational morality in modern society, Gellner seems to assume that the hallmark of practical reason must be either responsiveness to an external normative order, or the ability to generate on its own universally valid principles. Those are the only alternatives he considers.

Serious Lighting
for Serious Readers
Write or call for FREE Catalog
LEVENGER–Tools For Serious Readers
Dept. NR17, 480-C Concord Avenue
Belmont, MA 02178 (617) 484-0014

HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY
by E. Waterhouse Allen
Wicked, informed satire about Bureaucratic Types you should recognize! Distilled from 50 years work in human service agencies. 1st edit., $3.95.
BARK-BACK
P.O. Box 235, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

But there is another possibility. The traditional opposition between reason and history, to which Gellner still clings, could be given up. Reason, then, would no longer require seeing things sub specie aeternitatis, and recognizing the historical contingency of beliefs and practices would not imply that they lack rational warrant. This would not mean a return to the Hegelian idea that history is the progressive self-realization of reason. History has no goal. In its most promising form, such a conception of reason would run rather like this. Starting from beliefs and practices that are ours simply because a certain history is ours, we are entitled to keep affirming them so long as we find no positive grounds for revision. (After all, the reasons we spot for doubting some of our beliefs can come only from other beliefs we already have.) We need not suppose that anyone at all, whatever his place in history, has reason to adopt our beliefs and our practices, in order for us to believe that we have no reason to discard them. Reason is not a matter of rising above historical circumstance, but of how we live within it. This view of reason comes close to the "pragmatism" Richard Rorty has advocated in recent years, though I would stress more its critical potential. We rarely do as well in justifying our beliefs as, by our own lights, we could imagine doing.

Gellner himself places considerable emphasis upon how ideas of reason have changed over the course of history. It is but a small step from there to the realization that we need an idea of reason that is at peace with historical contingency. Gellner alludes to one of the strongest facts in favor of such a historical view of reason. Modern science, he claims, is in the same bind as morality. There are no fixed points of pure experience by which to evaluate scientific theories, since "our experiential data, which are to sit in judgment on all theories, are themselves theory-saturated." And yet science is for us the very paradigm of rationality. There is no use in hanging on to an ideal of reason that even science cannot meet. Gellner's familiar observation about theory-testing in science ceases to be worrisome if we turn to the view that reason consists in building on the beliefs we already happen to have, revising some, when necessary, on the basis of others.

How will our present moral situation look to such a conception of reason? Quite different from Gellner's bleak account. The collapse of premodern and Enlightenment justifications of morality need not bring down the moral beliefs that were to be justified. In most cases, these beliefs do not become unintelligible when they are untethered from some supposedly fixed basis in nature or in man. That we are never to treat another person merely as a means, or only when it is necessary to prevent some horrible evil, is a commitment that we can understand and affirm, for example, without having to suppose that it is God's law, or that any rational being whatsoever would assent to it. We can see it as simply a deeply embedded element of what has come to be our way of life.

Such beliefs would count as rational, on the view I am proposing, if we have, in addition, no positive grounds for putting them in doubt. And this, too, will be the case for a great many of our inherited moral beliefs. Contrary to Gellner, then, a disjunction between reason and morality is not a necessary burden of the modern mind. It stems, rather, from a continued reliance on the traditional idea that reason involves standing back from the flux of history and uncovering fixed points of reference. As Gellner's own theory of history shows, this idea was something that premodern, agrarian society bequeathed to the Enlightenment. The way out of the modern moral crisis he describes is to leave this idea behind, to become fully modern.

CHARLES LARMORE teaches philosophy at Columbia University and is the author of *Patterns of Moral Complexity* (Cambridge University Press).

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 2*

etry ("Poetry and Sanity," March 6). He seems unaware of the considerable extent to which distress at Pound's "exorbitance" keeps readers *from* Pound's poetry. Critics of Donoghue's generation accommodate themselves to the "Pound problem" by avoiding any systematic analysis of the poet's rage and anti-Semitism, either denouncing him for this or focusing exclusively on the felicities of the verse. In writing *The American Ezra Pound* I have assumed that, by now, readers can be attentive to some searching analysis of Pound's states of mind. Donoghue wants to foreclose discussion with the catch-all pronouncement "Pound's predominant emotions were anger, rage, and despair." This is not true of the first 50 years of Pound's life. That it *is* true of Pound after 1935 seems worthy of investigation. I am far from arguing that such investigation should supersede our attention to Pound as a poet. I do, however, believe that for many potential readers of Pound, some clearer insight into his "exorbitance" is a prerequisite for any serious engagement with the poetry.

WENDY STALLARD FLORY
Highland Park, New Jersey

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Hushed Puppies

OBEDIENT AS WE HAVE BECOME to the effrontery of government, all of us have just put our clocks and watches forward an hour. This is what is called civil time, as distinct from natural time, which the Good Lord gave us on the first day, as is concisely reported in Genesis 1:3-5. The history of daylight-saving time is a textbook example of our tolerance of meddling by government in what is none of its business. In the United States daylight-saving time was signed into law by Woodrow Wilson in March 1918, but sensibly repealed by Congress the following year. It was then reintroduced during the Second World War on a year-round basis. There could be no better illustration of the fact that war always increases the power of the state, which is why conservatives like Robert Taft opposed war and armaments. Government then strengthened its hand with the Uniform Time Act of 1967, which ruled that all states and U.S. possessions should observe DST between the last Sundays in April and October. Even then a state was allowed to exempt itself by law, and in addition to the Pacific possessions, Arizona and parts of Indiana are now exempt. It seems to have given no one the creeps that government should force every one of us to be in uniform. The excuse of an "energy crisis" encouraged government to reimpose year-long daylight-saving in 1974, but at the end of 1975 we returned to the end-of-April to the end-of-October DST system. Then in 1986, President Reagan, who had promised to take government off the backs of the people, signed a decree moving the start of daylight-saving time to the first Sunday in April. To complete this farcical story of unnecessary governmental regulation, the enforcement of the edict is overseen by the Department of Transportation!

IT IS PATHETIC THAT TWICE A year we fiddle with our clocks and watches just because the government tells us we must. What is day and what is night were clearly determined on the first day: "And God called the light day, and darkness night." Good thinking. Sundials—pretty things and not as intimidating as clocks—confirm his wisdom. And by the way: Why call it daylight-saving when no daylight is saved?

THE SUN STILL RISES AND THE sun sets, when we all (except for a few brave pre-Copernicans and Flat Earthers) believe the evidence of our science that the sun stays quite still, burning away with prodigious energy, while it is our Earth that whizzes giddily around it, at the same time turning on its own axis. (The realization that we are all on the surface of this globe spinning madly about the sky is only slightly less unnerving than the more recent discovery that the continents rest on plates that are always on the move; we can now hardly say we stand on firm ground.) We will always say the sun climbs and the sun declines to the horizon, because that is what we see in a sunrise and a sunset, two daily spectacles of such profound beauty that no painter, not even Turner, has seriously thought to catch them. I find this immensely reassuring, because it means that we can have our science, one of the illimitable endeavors of the human mind, and still keep our poetry. We will always, with the poets, think of the sun as a chariot, while believing, with the scientists, that it is an unusually bulky fusion reactor.

IF PEOPLE WISH "MORE DAYlight," let them get up with the sun. Everything else does. Flowers open and shut with the "movement" of the sun. Birds start their dawn chorus with the first lightening of the sky before sunrise. Why should we not do the same, commencing our day, and sending our children to school, with the sun? The early morning is the freshest part of the day. The people who get to work only by eight or nine have already missed, except in the four winter months, two, three, even four of their finest hours. Even in a big city, the birds protest against this perversity. To come out into the streets of Washington at sunrise is to hear their dawn song; and well you should stop to listen, because in an hour or two the infernal machines of internal combustion will arrive. Of course, the people who drive to work in their rooms on wheels never hear the birds anyhow. One of the arguments for daylight "saving" is that it provides people with time to enjoy "leisure activities" in the evening. Since when has it been a duty of government to encourage leisure, beyond the provision and maintenance of public parks? Anyway, most of what we now call "leisure activities" are uninteresting and soul-deadening, the mindless activity of people bored by the pointless jobs in which modern capitalism imprisons them. The true leisure activities are walking, which can be done at any time; fishing, which is best done at sunrise or sunset; and hunting, also a dawn activity. If people wish to hit a ball at each other over a net, or into 18 teacups sunk in the ground, and cannot get up with the sun to do it, let them play in the dark. Night falls, our language tells us. Let it fall when God and the sun ordain, and the conviviality and intimacies of the night begin, into which neither the sun nor we should peep.

IN THIS POLITICAL CAPITAL, IT turns out, the whole debate about politics, and therefore the activity of government, is askew. It is now barely possible for an intelligent person to join either of them. The core of our concern should not be "big" government or strong government—both of which I favor—but meddling government. Today's "conservatives" are proving themselves the meddlers. It is under the present conservative rage that government is incited and licensed to interfere in our most private choices—our morals, our consumption, our bedrooms. We used to raise our hands in horror at the Cultural Revolution in China, when friends and even family informed on women who used cosmetics. But America too is becoming a nation of informers. We are encouraged to go around checking on everyone else's eating, drinking, smoking, sexual proclivities, and general hygiene. We are being Kooped up by a man in a service uniform whose credentials for his meddling pronouncements are not persuasive, and who has as much arrogance as an army general trying to drill the civilian population. Another man in uniform, this one at the FDA, swept not only grapes but other perfectly good fruit off the supermarket shelves. Why could we not be left to decide for ourselves whether to take the risk of eating the grapes—or of eating the apples, about whose Alar the consumer groups have gotten us unduly alarmed? We can make a start by refusing to fiddle with our clocks and watches at the behest of the government. A nation will not long be free if its people do not have a whiff of anarchy in their spirit.

AMONG THE MOST TEDIOUS OF the meddlers are the contemporary breed of First Ladies, who now always take up Causes, mostly meddling. The last genuine contribution by a First Lady was made by Lady Bird Johnson, who went around scattering spring bulbs all over Washington (which are still there, obeying the movement of the sun). Barbara Bush may not be as detestable as Nancy Reagan, but she is bidding fair to become the biggest public bore in the nation. As for those White House puppies, they should have been drowned at birth. I would have volunteered for the job.

HENRY FAIRLIE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMBASSADOR LIBRARY
Big Spring, Texas

Celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Presidency of the United States.

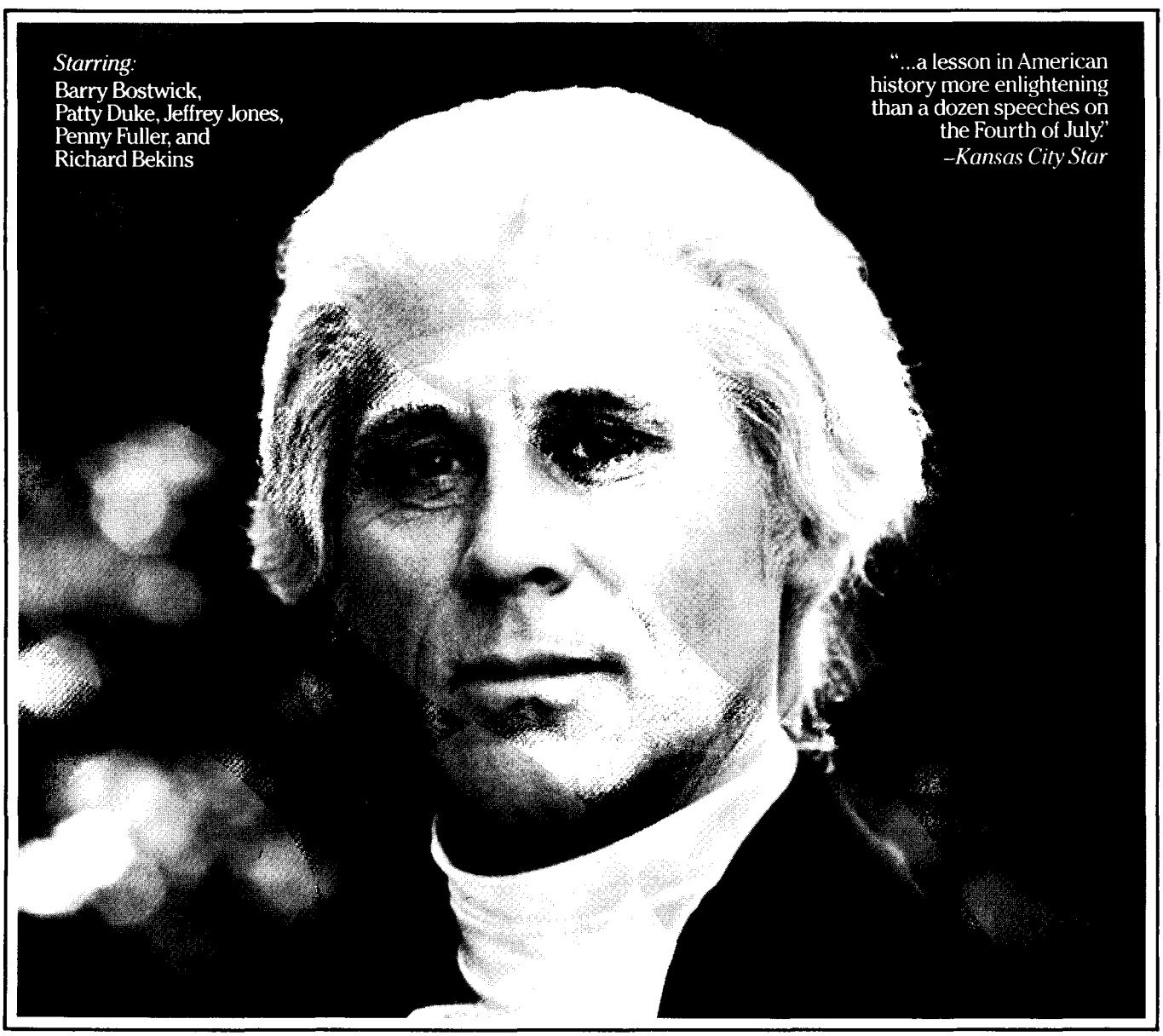
George Washington: The Forging of a Nation

Friday evenings, April 14th & 21st, 9-11 p.m. (EST) on PBS. Check local listings for time and channel.

He was the hero of the Revolution. Some would have made him king. Foreign attacks and citizen rebellion would test his statesmanship. Corruption, scandal, and treason would rock the new government and challenge his ideals. The epic story of Washington's administration is presented in honor of the 200th anniversary of the Presidency, April 30th.

A General Motors Mark of Excellence Presentation

GM


Starring:
Barry Bostwick,
Patty Duke, Jeffrey Jones,
Penny Fuller, and
Richard Bekins
"...a lesson in American history more enlightening than a dozen speeches on the Fourth of July."
–Kansas City Star

Produced by Gerber/MGM Television. Based on *Washington, The Indispensable Man*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning biography by James Thomas Flexner.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED